



A University of Sussex PhD thesis

Available online via Sussex Research Online:

<http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/>

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Please visit Sussex Research Online for more information and further details

**Queer Capital: Marxism in Queer Theory
and Post-1950 Poetics**

Natalia Raha

Dissertation submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Sussex

December 2018

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

NATALIA RAHA

CREATIVE AND CRITICAL WRITING PHD

QUEER CAPITAL: MARXISM IN QUEER THEORY AND POST-1950 POETICS

SUMMARY

This creative and critical doctoral dissertation undertakes a detailed consideration of the uptake of Marxism in twenty-first century queer theory, constituting this body of work as the field of queer Marxism. The dissertation analyses significant contributions to the field, such as the work of Rosemary Hennessy (2000, 2013) and Kevin Floyd (2009), alongside the key concepts elaborated in Marx's *Capital*, value, labour and the commodity, in order to establish a solid theoretical basis for queer Marxism. The thesis includes an invigoration of Marxist feminist social reproduction theory through a queer and trans studies perspective, establishing the concept of queer and trans social reproduction through a synthesis of historical materialist methodology and intellectual herstories of queer and trans activist groups Wages Due Lesbians and Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries. The thesis argues that queer Marxism elaborates an interrelation between economic and cultural spheres that understands their influence on material conditions and affect in the political present. It elaborates the affective condition of transfeminine brokenness in the context of contemporary challenges facing liberal transgender politics.

Queer Marxist theory is then deployed in an extended literary analysis that focuses on the work and life of gay femme poet John Wieners, and is finally developed in a creative portfolio – a collection of poems *of sirens / body & faultlines*. On the basis of archival research, the thesis situates Wieners' writing and political activities of the 1970s in the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation movements of Boston, Massachusetts, USA, as a form of queer labour, which includes the production of Gay Liberation newspaper *Fag Rag* and the publication of Wieners' *Behind the State Capitol, or Cincinnati Pike* (1975) by Boston's Good Gay Poets. Furthermore, reading letters, journals and other poems through a Mad Studies lens, I elaborate Wieners' survival of numerous psychiatric incarcerations from 1960 – 1972 in the context of institutional homophobia, and its influence on his politics and aesthetics.

of sirens / body & faultlines develops a linguistically-innovative queer lyric, elaborating experiments in language and life, amid contemporary transformations of capital and neoliberal regimes of social and economic divestment in London. Inhabiting the present tense and attending closely to to its

material conditions, the poems deploy language and its visual permutations on the page in the service of queer and trans life and a queer of colour, anti-capitalist politics that refuses assimilation, attempting to rupture the syntax of homonormativity and transnormativity. The poems capture moments of political and affective affirmation and tumult, provide radical elaborations and defamiliarisations of trans and queer embodiment under the conditions of neoliberal capital disinvestment, wage labour, and queer life while dreaming in the service of queer and trans world-making.

Queer Capital: Marxism in queer theory and post-1950 poetics

| | |
|---|-----|
| Acknowledgements | 1 |
| Introduction: Marxism in queer theory and queer Marxist poetics | 5 |
| I.1 Queer Marxism in the twenty-first century | 9 |
| I.2 What is queer Marxism? | 23 |
| I.3 Queer Hi[r]storical Materialism as method | 42 |
| I.4 Chapter summaries | 47 |
| I.5 Faultlines, bodies, poetics | 54 |
| Chapter 1: 'Natural form queers': Reifications of desire and the value form of the commodity | 61 |
| 1.1 Historicising the reification of desire | 63 |
| 1.2 Cultural values, second skins | 71 |
| 1.3 The concept of value in Marx | 75 |
| 1.4 Spivak's value theory and the natural form of the commodity | 81 |
| 1.5 The historical subsumption of use-values | 87 |
| 1.6 Marketing gay and lesbian commodity cultures | 91 |
| 1.7 The neoliberal incorporation of queer difference | 97 |
| Chapter 2: A Queer Marxist [Trans]feminism: Queer and Trans Social Reproduction | 104 |
| 2.1 Wages Due Lesbians and the emotional work of queer life under Thatcher | 104 |
| 2.2 Contemporary Marxist feminism and queer emotional labour | 111 |
| 2.3 Queer and trans social reproduction | 119 |
| 2.4 Domestic Resistance: Women of Colour Feminist perspectives on socially reproductive work | 130 |
| 2.5 Queer and trans of colour domestic resistance: Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries | 132 |
| 2.6 Conclusion | 139 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter 3: Queer labour in Boston: John Wieners, <i>Fag Rag</i> and Gay Liberation | 145 |
| 3.1 Before the Straight Capitol: Situating John Wieners in Gay Liberation | 145 |
| 3.2 Historicising forms of queer work | 154 |
| 3.3 The labour of queer world-making in Wieners' San Francisco, 1958 | 166 |
| 3.4 Making Gay Liberation | 170 |
| 3.5 Printing liberation: <i>Fag Rag</i> and Gay Liberation in Boston | 175 |
| 3.6 Poetry, cocksucking and revolution behind the state capitol | 187 |
| Chapter 4: The Survival of John Wieners: Psychiatric incarceration, poetics and liberation | 197 |
| 4.1 "inhabit your bailiwick to breakneck resistance": Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation "Zaps Witchdoctors" in Boston, Spring 1972 | 197 |
| 4.2 Maddening the Stakes: Mad Studies | 203 |
| 4.3 "... and a paper from the state saying I am 'a mentally ill person'": naturalising psychiatric violence in contemporary readings of Wieners | 209 |
| 4.4 "And we read, grasp for the word / as a life-preserver": The survival of John Wieners | 214 |
| 4.5 "And in the day I am tormented by the memory": poetry as elixir and the knowledge of the Mad | 224 |
| 4.6 "that all the doctors in the world won't help": Wieners' psychiatric survivor consciousness and poetics | 229 |
| 4.7 Conclusion: Boston Mental Patients' Liberation Front | 235 |
| Chapter 5: Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism | 238 |
| 5.1 Introduction: constituting transfeminine brokenness | 238 |
| 5.2 Trans liberalism at the borders of Brexit | 240 |
| 5.3 Separations of transfeminine bodies and work | 248 |
| 5.4 Capital devaluations | 250 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 5.5 Labour against genders | 252 |
| 5.6 Cultivating transfeminist worlds | 253 |
| <i>of sirens / body & faultlines</i> | 257 |
| radio / threat | 259 |
| to Vladimir Mayakovsky, 12.54am | 260 |
| (late letter, waterloo bridge 11.31am) | 261 |
| “take treat out of days mediocrate...” | 262 |
| (lunch poem) | 263 |
| [poem. in absolute solidarity with the Southall Black Sisters demonstration against the UKBA, 24.10.13] | 264 |
| [second transfeminist tract / i] | 266 |
| (police dream) | 267 |
| “wealth harmonics...” | 268 |
| the modern legal system is not for saving you | 270 |
| “made a promise for a...” | 271 |
| “autoproclaim...” | 273 |
| THE MARRIAGE OF GEORGE OSBORNE & IAIN DUNCAN SMITH (epithalamion) | 275 |
| affective dialectics, second treatise | 281 |
| [of sirens / body & faultlines] | 290 |
| ((a fire)) | 291 |
| < backline > | 295 |
| “attach crux of evenings...” | 296 |
| (poem announcing the end of england) | 297 |
| “second split...” | 298 |
| (shoes, danube) | 299 |
| “pulled from / ease...” | 300 |
| “of the production of scorched earth &...” | 301 |
| “our archives of health, abstraction...” | 302 |
| priderant in five parts | 303 |
| (when we’re working while we’re asleep) | 306 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| “our dreaming / / monopoly...” | 308 |
| “after rituals : ...” | 309 |
| (light poem) | 310 |
| “basic virals of the year will claim...” | 311 |
| “ “ “ focus cross sun cheek slight...” | 312 |
| “in the survival of winter” | 313 |
| (angela d wakes me from a dream) | 314 |
| “step circ–...” | 315 |
| (society will execute itself) | 316 |
| “that fear bred by law &...” | 317 |
| “negative constellations of...” | 318 |
| (london will die) | 319 |
| £/€xtinctions | 321 |
| “escalate...” | 322 |
| “«#pronouncements...” | 324 |
| “lips sketch across our disintegration...” | 325 |
| “shutter out humming our...” | 326 |
| “left to dream / ...” | 327 |
| “out of all lines we / ...” | 328 |
| “former neighbourhoods...” | 329 |
| “good immigrant...” | 330 |
| “metropol office / rot...” | 331 |
| “in fever dream...” | 332 |
| “autumnal sun „...” | 333 |
| “decades reassured...” | 334 |
| “our target to feel here...” | 335 |
| “here in the diaspora...” | 339 |
| “of future’s england / its stratifications...” | 340 |
| “transmissions daily...” | 342 |
| “new humanity : buffer...” | 343 |
| “our presence in the city / ...” | 344 |
| “honed tongues, vectors of broke / ...” | 345 |
| “class war mechinations...” | 346 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| “of possession of the earth...” | 347 |
| “on the promise of soil...” | 348 |
| “by the mesh of your inactive...” | 349 |
| “morning / proselytise...” | 350 |
| “dominator’s europe...” | 351 |
| “euro excess...” | 352 |
| “the negation of england as island...” | 353 |
| “mourner’s europe...” | 354 |
| “warring europe _z ...” | 355 |
| (after fanon) | 356 |
| “chills / _« rivercurve...” | 357 |
| “)) paint stain / trace scissorcut...” | 358 |
| “§ fleshmetal grip into ocean” | 359 |
| de/compositions | 360 |
| [stryd manig nines] / [revolutions on queen street] | 361 |
| (after Vahni’s reading) | 366 |
| “for what we may be...” | 368 |
| “of how we might be living tonight...” | 369 |
| “growth deplete / derelict...” | 370 |
| “ _u wire-flesh striated h/ ours, fatigued...” | 371 |
| “winddrilling / trace footfall...” | 372 |
| “collapsing temporalxs...” | 373 |
| “bitter days in the crushing...” | 374 |
| “floats [of] light / fractures[, again]...” | 375 |
| “caught / between...” | 376 |
| “if your body should be territory” | 377 |
| “flapper sequins, metallics, the grrls us who loved in...” | 378 |
| “that breaks our downgazing...” | 381 |
| “the decade’s gutting, tor...” | 382 |
| [after l’aquila] | 383 |
| “on the vision of yur futures, ruptured isles...” | 384 |

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Conclusion | 386 |
| Bibliography | 392 |

List of Illustrations

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1 – Queer theories of labour and their relation to capitalist production and queer cultural production | 164 |
| Figure 1 – Cover of <i>Fag Rag</i> (No. 1, June 1971) | 181 |
| Figure 2 – Cover of <i>Fag Rag</i> (No. 44, 1987) | 181 |
| Figure 3 – Boston MA Gay Liberation, Boston Gay Pride, June 1972 | 183 |
| Figure 4 – Cover and reverse of <i>Fag Rag</i> (No. 10, Fall 1974) | 191 |
| Figure 5 – ‘Good Gay Poets’ double page spread, <i>Fag Rag</i> (No. 12, Spring 1975) | 196 |
| Figure 6 – ‘GML Zaps Witchdoctors’, <i>Fag Rag</i> (No. 3, 1972) | 197 |
| ‘[of sirens / body & faultlines]’ collage | 290 |
| ‘Dehoarding, Vauxhall’ image by Mendoza | 360 |

Acknowledgements

A version of the chapter ‘Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism’ was originally published in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 116:3, 2017, pp. 632-646. It is reproduced with permission from Duke University Press.

The version of the manuscript *of sirens, body & faultlines* was recently been published by Boiler House Press, Norwich, 2018. It has been published under my name Nat Raha and is reproduced with permission from the publisher.

This thesis was written over six years, with the financial support of my parents Ruma Raha-Chowdhury and Sandip Raha. I thank them both for their on-going support of my education.

The McCarthy Bursary from the School of English, and the Alumni Travel Grant from the Doctoral School, University of Sussex, funded the archive research that undergirds parts of this thesis. This included work undertaken at Archives and Special Collections, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT; John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, MA; Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY; and Archives and Special Collections, Snell Library, Northeastern University, Boston, MA in the USA. In particular, I would like to thank Melissa Batt at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut – her knowledge of their collections pointed me in the direction of key materials for my research. Resources at the British Library and National Poetry Library in London, New York Public Library and National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh were also consulted, alongside

resources from the University of Sussex Library. Funding from the Doctoral School and School of English, University of Sussex enabled me to present papers from this work at academic conferences in the USA, UK and in Italy.

My supervisors, Samuel Solomon and Keston Sutherland, provided critical insight, support and motivation for this work. Their encouragement and challenges have helped to deepen the scope of the thesis and will have a long-lasting influence on my research. In particular, Sam's inspiration and intellectual and emotional labour transformed the direction of my work and thought. I extend my deepest thanks to both of them. In addition, I would like to thank Rachel O'Connell, who supervised my project in its first year and who provided important comment on my work during annual reviews.

A deep thank you is extended to my friends and intellectual collaborators without whom this project would have never found its content, shape, politics and depth. Thank you to Mijke van der Drift for her life-changing role as an interlocutor and for her pivotal work in establishing and spreading radical transfeminism across the globe. Thank you to Mendoza for encouraging my pursuit of this degree and my life commitment to poetry. Mendoza's photographs are used as the covers to the sequences "radio / threat" (251) and "de/compositions" (352). Thanks to Jacqueline Frost for the encouragement and inspiration that boosted the poetics and intellectual history of the critical dimensions of this project. Thank you to Alexander Eisenthal, Daniel Lourenço, Caoimhe McGuinness, Cass Smith and Natalie Wright for their company in many forms (intellectual, political, culinary, digital, musical) over the years these ideas were fermented and lived. Thanks to Grietje Baars, Jennifer Fraser,

Harry Josephine Giles, Chryssy Hunter, Darcy Leigh, Shamira Meghani, Anna Ramberg, Kuchenga Shenje, Betty Sz for long-lasting support and encouragement.

A special thank you to Sean Bonney, Anni Cameron, Vahni Capildeo, Jos Charles, Eli Clare, Callie Gardner, Frances Kruk, Peter Manson, Raju Rage, Nisha Ramayya, Verity Spott, Laurel Uziell and Jackie Wang, for poems, poetry readings, discussions, comments, songs and ideas that fed the substance of the creative and critical elements of this project – for moments of affirmation and inspiration that distinctly belong to poetry.

My work on John ‘Jackie’ Wieners and Liberation print cultures in Boston has benefited hugely from the knowledge and insights of Jim Dunn, Maria Damon, Kevin Killian and Michael Seth Stewart – I thank them for their on-going support.

Thank you to my colleagues Glyn Davis, Laura Guy, Fiona Anderson and Benny Nemerofsky Ramsay, of the ‘Cruising the Seventies: Unearthing Pre-HIV/AIDS queer sexual cultures’ research project at the Edinburgh College of Art and beyond. It has been a blessing to complete this thesis while Cruising the Seventies with all of you.

Numerous reading and discussion groups influenced the work of this thesis. A particular thanks is extended to the London Mad Studies Reading Group (2014-15), the London Marx *Capital*, Volume 3 Reading Group (2013-2016), and the Edinburgh Decolonising Discussion Group.

Thank you to Sarah Arens, Sarah Bernstein, Sean Bonney, Sam Dolbear, Nish Doshi, Eli Erlick, Tom Hastings and Natalie Wright for their eleventh hour

support in proofreading the thesis. Thank you to Aren Aizura for editorial support and patience on the 'transfeminine brokenness' chapter.

And thank you to Sarah Golightley for the love, support, kindness, patience, encouragement and company through the long of this project. This work is written out of love. Thanks to Angela A. Davis and Claude Cahun Snugglesberg for their enduring patience, cuddles and company at study time.

Introduction: Marxism in Queer Theory and queer Marxist poetics

In a prose poem from his 1975 collection *Behind the State Capitol; or Cincinnati Pike*, published by Boston's Good Gay Poets collective, the white working-class, gay femme psychiatric survivor poet John Wieners (1934-2002) writes:

A factor of consciousness developing in the gay world, conducive to those or whomever one's audience or prey is straightly reminding one, our people that despite sordid, past histories and oft-inherited bigotry from countless, other civilizations over the face of the earth, expressed to self-indulgence of the most blatant matter, gaining some satisfaction in self-effort, that they are real and different persons with the largest potential of the whole, human race for the realization of their own, since they have been blasphemed for so long, morally good selves ('A Popular Belief as Practiced: Indiscriminate Promiscuity', Wieners 1975: 88).

Working through a complex syntax of clauses piling up and echoing an idiom of Marx, Wieners' poem articulates the transformed consciousness of the Gay and Lesbian Liberation era in the early 1970s. The poem expresses the belief that gay and lesbian people have the "largest potential" of all humanity for self-realisation through collective means and demands the fullest possible realisation of gay life. This potential is reflected in the "satisfaction" such people take in "self-effort", which can be read as self-expression and the pursuit of sexual satisfaction despite the negativity that may be read into the clause "self-indulgence in the most blatant manner". The poet believes in their potential in spite of the experiences of oppression and violence they have faced (experience that extends hyperbolically across space and time – "bigotry from countless, other civilizations..."). Written as a response to an essay by Wieners's colleague Charley Shively published in a special, joint-issue of the newspapers *Fag Rag* and *Gay Sunshine* (celebrating the 5th Anniversary of the Stonewall riot), Wieners's poem furthermore claims a positive morality to the

liberation-era, gay sexual praxis of “indiscriminate promiscuity”.¹ The poem presents the promise of a queer Marxist poetics, using poetry to reflect and dream of the social transformation of gay and lesbian people, who have and could further transform the world.

Wieners was “a founding member of the ‘New American’ poetry that flourished in America after the Second World War” (Wieners 2015: 199). As Wieners studied at Black Mountain College in the 1950s with Charles Olson before moving to San Francisco, he has primarily been situated by literary critics within the ‘projective’ movement of American poetry (after Olson), alongside poets of the West Coast of the late ‘50s invested in magical practice (such as Jack Spicer), and more recently as part of the ‘Boston School’ of Poetry of the 1960s and 1970s (Dewhurst 2014).² As a lyric poet active in the Gay Liberation and Mental Patient’s Liberation Movements, in Boston, Massachusetts in the early-to-mid 1970s, Wieners provides a significant example of a radical, queer poetic praxis, aesthetically and politically, that has yet to receive critical attention within literary studies or queer studies.

The poet’s writing and other political contributions to these Movements, and the social context in which his labour was undertaken and work published offer a vibrant and challenging history of queer, collectivised cultural production. In this thesis, I argue that Wieners’s poetry from the ‘70s constitutes a form of

¹ Charley Shively, ‘Indiscriminate Promiscuity as an Act of Revolution’ (Leyland 1991: 257-263; first published in *Fag Rag/Gay Sunshine: Stonewall 5th Anniversary Issue*, Summer 1974). In this essay, Shively argues for a “socialism of love and sex” and, emphasising the materiality of bodies, proposes the need to love all bodies indiscriminately of race, age, beauty, sex or national origin (261).

² Charles Olson, ‘Projective Verse’ (1950). First published in *Poetry New York*, 3; reprinted in *Selected Writings* (1966). New York: New Directions, 15-30. The ‘New American Poetry’ is primarily denoted through the publication of Donald Allen’s anthology, *The New American Poetry, 1945-1960* (1960). New York: Grove Press. I discuss the linguistically innovative poetry later in the introduction.

collectively produced queer labour, published and printed within the movement by the Gay community press, created in the form of commodities did not make profit, commodities that furthermore struggled to survive societal homophobia. Through the development of the Gay Liberation movement in North America during the 1970s, radical Gay and Lesbian consciousness claims a public and international stage, materialising through the labour of members of the movement into forms of cultural production and political intervention – such as newspapers, poetry and/or protest. This labour challenges the alienations of hetero- and cis-normative capitalist society, inaugurating alternative publics and worlds (“the gay world”) on the horizon of queerness (Muñoz 2009: 1). Wieners’s poetic and political labour works in service of queer world-making by positing radical forms of Gay consciousness and offering political strategies and books for Gay and Mental Patients’ Liberation.

This creative and critical thesis constitutes queer Marxism as a discipline, while forging a queer Marxist poetics. Throughout this introduction and the first three chapters of the thesis, I focus on the uptake of the ideas of Marx and Marxism in twenty-first century queer theory, creating a substantive dialogue between queer Marxist works for the first time. Furthermore, the thesis presents key concepts from Marx’s oeuvre with a primary focus on *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 1 (1990), to ground queer Marxism. I detail queer Marxism’s uptake of Marx’s concepts of the Commodity, Value, Labour, and the Marxist feminist conceptions of Social Reproduction, expanding the scope of these ideas and developing coherent theoretical tools for queer Marxism. I argue that, by rooting queer Marxism in Marx’s theory of value, we can theorise the relationship between queer and trans people, queer cultures and practices of labour to capitalist production, and elaborate our complicities with, and

resistances to, capitalist social relations. I draw together queer theories and readings of Marx's value form to theorise the assimilation of LGBTQ lives and cultures under neoliberal capitalism, while attending to the corresponding devaluation of the labour power of queer and trans people. I conceptualise and elaborate a theory of queer and trans social reproduction within these historical contexts. The thesis pays close attention to the forms of world-making and struggle that emerge, and forms of cultural production that materialise, when queer and trans people work for capital and for each other.

The creative and critical components of my thesis take up the aesthetics of post-1950 Anglophone poetics in order to explore and animate a queer Marxist poetics. The post-1950 framing denotes an engagement with the legacy of Olson's 'projective' or 'open field' poetics, and its influence in the aesthetics of queer writers of the New American Poetry and linguistically innovative poetry in the UK and Ireland. A queer Marxist poetics is elaborated through historicised readings of Wieners (who studied extensively with Olson) and other queer contemporary poets, and pursued explicitly through my manuscript *of sirens / body & faultlines*, in order to invent and deepen the theory of queer Marxism through poetic thought.³ As I discuss later in the introduction, these queer Marxist poetries deploy an open field poetics that uses the visual construction of the page in service of expression and making meaning, while documenting, reflecting and imagining the personal and political lives and struggles of LGBTQ people. In light of the transformations of capitalism and

³ Wieners studied with Olson at Black Mountain College in 1955-56, and later again at Buffalo, New York in the mid-late 1960s. While I do not detail these periods of study, I address in chapter 4 Olson's pastoral support of Wieners during Wieners's psychiatric incarcerations in the early 1960s and the survival of Wieners's knowledge and poetics.

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (or trans), and queer (LGBTQ)⁴ lives in the neoliberal period, poetry has been an important art form for self-expression, capturing experiences, affects and histories, at times through highly inventive uses of language.⁵ Poetry animates the challenges, joys, dramas and pains of such life, while enacting new worlds and ideas.

1.1 Queer Marxism in the twenty-first century

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the relationship between queer studies and Marxism has evolved significantly, as work within queer studies has reinvigorated key Marxist concepts to develop new theories under the banner of queer Marxism.⁶ Queer Marxism has advanced crucial aspects of queer theory's critique of neoliberalism, in particular by bringing the demands and transformations of capitalist accumulation, commodification and the flows of capital into queer theory's purview. As Jordy Rosenberg and Amy Villarejo identify in their introduction to the special issue of *GLQ* on 'Queer studies and the Crises of Capitalism' (2012), "the turn to analysing Neoliberalism finds a ready analytic tool in the history of Marxist critique" (2012: 4). The editors

⁴ I hereafter use LGBT or LGBTQ and 'queer and trans', specifying certain sexualities, genders and forms of gender non-conformity when necessary. This will include usage of historical terms and problematizing common usages of 'LGBTQ' as an acronym.

⁵ By 'neoliberal period', I am describing the era that begins in the 1970s, when neoliberal economic doctrines are first enacted through governmental policies in various parts of the globe. This would include landmark events such as 1973 Chilean coup d'état, the 1975 near-bankruptcy of New York City, and the 1979 election of Margaret Thatcher to UK Prime Minister. For further reading, see Harvey (2005). Despite the ascendancy of far right and populist figures in the 2010s, we are still living within a period of neoliberal capitalist hegemony.

⁶ Queer Marxism as emerged alongside studies in queer temporality (Edelman 2004; Halberstam 2005; Love 2007; Muñoz 2009; and Freeman 2010), often in dialogue with them (Floyd 2009; Crosby et al. 2012). In comparison to such studies, queer Marxism has not had a significant critical appraisal.

emphasise the “possibility” of the “encounter” between queer studies and the dialectical approach characteristic of Marxist thought to “analyz[e] capitalist culture in its dynamic, geographically diverse, and contradictory articulations” (4). They note that “Marxist and historical-materialist methodologies undergird the foundational texts of the study of sexuality”, referring to the work of Michel Foucault, John D’Emilio and Gayle Rubin (3). However, the conceptions of capitalist accumulation, commodification – and a much wider range of issues advanced within Marxism and Marxist feminism, such as unequal and/or racial and gendered divisions of labour, methods of capitalist accumulation, the critique of racial capitalism (Robinson 1983, Davis 1981, Wang 2018) and Marx’s labour theory of value – remained mostly outside of queer studies’ critical interests until the late 1990s. John D’Emilio’s essay ‘capitalism and gay identity’, addressing the historical relationship between gay and lesbian workers in the mid-twentieth century, migrating to metropolitan centres in the USA (1982) has remained a significant exception; alongside work on the commodification of queer identities (Clark 1991, Chasin 2000) and on the position of gay and lesbian subjects in political economy (Gluckman and Reed 1997).

Positioning Rosemary Hennessy’s *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual identities in late capitalism* (2000) as the first, book-length study in what has become queer Marxism, this thesis consolidates queer theory’s uptake of Marxism in the twenty-first century to constitute this body of work as queer Marxism, interrogating its arguments while developing and reorienting further critical tools of Marxism and Marxist feminism for queer studies. As Kevin Floyd indicates, the “greater openness” of queer studies “to the kind of direct engagement with Marxism that emphasizes its explanatory power as much as

its epistemological limitations,” is “by no means unrelated” to the “widespread critical consideration of the dynamics of capital in its current, global, neoliberal phase” (2009: 2). Throughout this thesis, I emphasise the importance of developing queer Marxist thought and poetics that speaks directly to historical and contemporary struggles in the era of neoliberalism.

In this section of the introduction, I outline the key terms of queer theory’s critique of neoliberalism, which have helped problematize the introduction of LGBT rights within neoliberal states. This includes outlining a definition of neoliberalism itself, while detailing the forms of structural adjustment that have occurred in the UK in this decade under the banner of (fiscal) austerity – transformations in material conditions that is reflected in particular through the creative component of this project. These terms and definitions set the stage for detailing the developments of queer Marxism in the twenty-first century – which has responded to and advanced this critique of neoliberalism. Furthermore, it provides the context for the critical and creative work of this thesis, which specifically addresses the context of crisis and austerity and their economic and social implications. After reviewing key contributions and concepts advanced by twenty-first century queer Marxism, I address the methodological approach of the thesis, what I describe as a ‘queer hi[r]storical materialism’. The introduction concludes with a summary of the chapters of the project, which includes a more detailed introduction to John Wieners.

Neoliberalism describes, in David Harvey’s words, a political economic doctrine “that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade” (2005: 2). Within such a doctrine, the role of the state is to “create

and preserve” the institutional frameworks that can secure such rights (2). Harvey emphasises that neoliberalism has however also “become hegemonic as a mode of discourse”, that materially has pursued the “‘creative destruction’, not only of prior institutional frameworks and powers [...] but also of divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions, technological mixes, ways of life and thought, reproductive activities, attachments to the land and habits of the heart”. Furthermore, Harvey emphasises neoliberalism “has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret the world” (3). Hence, neoliberalism, as the economic and political doctrine from the late 1970s into the 2010s, has transformed logic, sense, and the substance of social and material life. In the words of former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who pioneered the enactment of neoliberal policies in the UK from the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, “economics are the method, the object is to change the soul”.⁷

Across the 1990s and into the early 2000s, queer theorists and other queer writers started to advance a critique of neoliberalism, as I discuss below.⁸ Theoretically, this work was primarily rooted in a reception of the later thought of Michel Foucault, addressing the role of the state and its institutions in upholding social orders in the neoliberal period and the period of the HIV/AIDS crisis. This work tends to forgo the analysis of financial capitalism and the role of capital in structural transformation that have animated Marxist

⁷ *Sunday Times*, 7 May 1988, cited in Dardot and Laval (2013: 263).

⁸ Numerous canonical queer writers from this period address the social and political contexts, drawing links to neoliberal social and economic transformations, including Sarah Schulman, Dennis Cooper and Eileen Myles. Writing in their 1991 collection *Not Me*, Myles describes fiscal austerity in New York City after the city went bankrupt: “It’s not the poor, / it’s not the rich, / it’s us. / [...] We realize the city was / sold in 1978. / But we were asleep. / We woke and the victors / were all around us” (1991, back cover).

critiques across this period. More recently, queer studies has emphasised the connection between the enfranchisement of LGBTQ subjects proposed by states through the discourse of rights, the complicity of states in promoting discourses of nationalism and neo-imperialist or neo-colonialist projects of warfare and development for the purposes of accumulating Western capital (Puar 2007). As Anna Agathangelou, M. Daniel Bassichis and Tamara Spira argue, within this neoliberal period, “[i]t is not only sexual and gendered arrangements that have been rendered flexible... but an entire retooling of the possibilities of life that is attempted through a neoliberal narrative of private rights, peace and security” (2008: 124). The authors emphasise that this has operated through a “deeply racist and imperialist symbolic, affective and material order”, that at its root requires the labour of marginalised workers, often of colour, to reproduce regimes of incarceration, such as national borders and prisons (2008: 124).

Marxism – as a project that has theorised the historical development and reproduction of capitalism as a system that, hampered by periodic crises, reproduces, mediates and transforms social and material life – provides a crucial tool in understanding and historicising the structural transformations of neoliberalism. Writing after the 2008 financial crisis with an eye toward the “possible new futures” after neoliberalism, Lisa Duggan emphasises that “the most important thing” for “queer leftists” is “to become fully literate in economic policy” (Duggan and Kim 2011/2012). However, a common truism that Marxism has elided issues of sexuality proceeds only through the elision of the work that has attempted to bring the issues around gender and sexuality into Marxism since its inception and the work of queer historians operating through a materialist framework (D’Emilio 1982, 1983; Bérubé 2011; 1917

Collective 1996).⁹ In the fallout of the 2008 financial crisis, which pushed many individuals, families, homeowners, communities, and nations into economic desolation, there has been a significant, new reception of the work of Karl Marx and other Marxist thinkers across significantly different intellectual disciplines, social movements and mainstream left political parties.

While the global political landscape – and the UK national context within which this thesis was written – has undoubtedly influenced the reception and uptake of Marx within queer theory, many of the key, book-length projects of queer Marxism were produced in the years before the crisis, such as Hennessy (2000), Joseph (2002) and Floyd (2009, *The Reification of Desire* reads as a pre-crisis text), alongside special issues of the journals *Radical History Review* ('Queer Futures, 100, Winter 2008) and *Rethinking Marxism* (18: 3, 2006, see Klotz, 'Towards a Marxian Sexual Politics', 2006). Indeed, as Rosenberg and Villarejo remind us, "crisis is endemic to the functioning of capitalism and has been since its inception":

⁹ A lineage includes August Bebel's *Woman and Socialism* (1879) and the work of Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand – which addresses issues of sexuality, women and social support of childrearing in the context of the Bolshevik revolution. For an excellent summary of this lineage in regard to sexuality, see Hennessy – who considers the work of Kollontai, Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Willem Reich, Herbert Marcuse, gay socialist groups such as the Gay Left Collective (and their journal *Gay Left*), Red Butterfly and the Furies, and Ann McClintock (Hennessy 2000: 39-52). On the relationship between materialism and sexuality, see the psychoanalytically influenced writings of Frankfurt School theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (Adorno (2005), Adorno and Horkheimer (1997)). On the question of gender and Marxism, see the work of Marxist feminists Silvia Federici, Campaign for Wages for Housework, Mariarosa Dalla Costa, Leopoldina Fortunati, Selma James – I discuss this canon of Marxist feminist writing and its relationship to queer and trans social reproduction in Chapter 2.

In addition, in his 1844 writings, Marx considered the relation of the alienation of labour under capitalism to sexuality's relation to self-actualisation through work, albeit to a limited extent (Klotz, 'Alienation', 2006).

By this we mean not just that capitalism typically produces speculative bubbles and crashes—though it has, at least since the seventeenth century.¹⁰ More specifically, we emphasize the degree to which capitalism routinely experiences limits to accumulation in the form of resistance on the part of labor, technological and political hurdles, geographic challenges, and so on. Such crises do not, in themselves, signal the death knell of capitalism. Quite the opposite (2012: 1).

The decade following the financial crisis has seen dramatic material, cultural and political shifts, as the new regimes of accumulation and dispossession enacted have dramatically reshaped the fabric of life and its opportunities for many. These have had a particular impact on LGBTQ people and have had drastic implications on our everyday lives and worlds. We have witnessed, on the one hand, what seem to be improvements in the legal and social enfranchisement of LGBTQ people, including the legalising of Same-Sex Marriage in various parts of the globe, increasing visibility in mainstream culture and larger public LGBTQ cultures – if at times disproportionately in metropolitan centres – and improvements in education regarding LGBTQ lives. On the other hand, economic divestment and disenfranchisement, coupled to the social and economic impacts of social homophobia, transphobia and biphobia working at times in concert with racism, anti-Blackness, ableism, sanism, Islamophobia and xenophobia, have significantly altered the life chances and possibilities facing LGBTQ people. Of course, these transformations have met resistance, socially and culturally, practically and artistically. As Miranda Joseph identifies, queer studies provides a different definition for crisis to the mainstream media – not merely a financial crisis, instigated by “the irrationality of individual decision making” (Crosby et al. 2012: 132): “On the contrary, we see that people have been engaged in diverse

¹⁰ I address this in my poem, “our archives of health, abstraction...” (294).

struggles, over time, ... to make viable lives, to cobble together resources to enable fulfilment of—and occasionally resistance to—norms” (132).

The material conditions undergirding queer and trans life and struggle have developed alongside the (sometimes precarious) institutionalisation of the politics of queer liberalism, homonationalism and trans liberalism, the cultural politics of homonormativity and transnormativity, and acts of pinkwashing by states and businesses. In its canonical definition in the early 2000s, Lisa Duggan describes homonormativity as “a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them” (2003: 50). Homonormativity has been forged through political agendas affirming the importance of marriage and the family rooted in domesticity and consumption for society and the economy. Through a consolidation of social conservative domestic forms and privatising economic behaviours, homonormativity has social and economic implications in regard to the labour of social reproduction and unequal divisions of labour within neoliberal society, as I discuss in Chapter 2. The emergence of the cultural politics of homonormativity is well addressed in queer studies (e.g. Warner 1999). Connecting homonormativity to broader cultural change under neoliberalism in the 1990s and the politics of respectability, Rosemary Hennessy writes:

An emergent neoliberal culture promoted values associated with the professional middle-class sector, among them a driving consumerism and a privatized affective life of domesticity and respectable citizenship. As these values were redefining the cultural mainstream, the once-fixed boundaries regulating normative sexuality according to a heterosexual/homosexual distinction were undergoing a parallel alteration, and gay respectability was being slowly absorbed into cosmopolitan culture. The result was not, however, a less rigid, amplified set of possibilities for human identifications and affective relations (2013: 147).

Homonormativity demarcates the transformation of cultural values that have assimilated certain forms of respectable cultures and expressions of queerness into a broader cosmopolitanism. Hennessy concludes by tying this explicitly to changing flows of capital and writes “[t]he niche for queerness that neoliberalism opened was one that could be congruent with market rationalities, with the free subject of capital, and with multicultural diversity” (147). I will return to connection between capital, queerness and multicultural diversity at the end of Chapter 1.

The ascendancy of homonormativity has not occurred without changes in politics at the levels of government and governmental policy around LGBT people and lives on local, national and international levels. Queer Liberalism describes the politics whereby governments and organisations across the political spectrum propose social inclusion into the frameworks of cis- and heteronormative capitalist societies and nation states, through new institutional modes such as Gay or Same-Sex Marriage. Queer theorists, including Lisa Duggan (2003), Jasbir Puar (2007), David Eng (2010), Lauren Berlant (2011), Robert McRuer (2006), among others, have highlighted how the pursuit of LGBT rights affirms a politics of privilege. Given that the forms of legal and social recognition pursued centre domestic intimacy, the monogamous couple and ‘good citizenship’, such politics has reasserted relations of private property and socio-economic privilege that cohere around these forms of recognition. Furthermore, addressing discourses of productivity promoting trans inclusion in the labour market, Dan Irving argues that neoliberalism has shifted the meaning of rights and linked them to one’s active worth and “work ethic”, whereby “[t]hose who have attained material ‘success’ measured by one’s participation in labor and consumer economies and demonstrate financial,

physical and spiritual fitness prove themselves deserving of rights” (2012: 157). In such cases – also witnessed in UK discourses around benefit claimants in the mid-2010s, which I discuss below – as a member or representative of a minority group, one must prove themselves worthy on terms established by the state and wider society in order to be given rights or to access one’s rights.

David Eng provides an important elaboration in *The Feeling of Kinship* (2010). He argues that the political consequence of queer liberalism as a “product of late capitalist rationalization”, is the “[s]hifting from a politics of protest and redistribution to one of rights and recognitions” – whereby queer life is transformed into “an aestheticized lifestyle predicated on choice” (2010: 30, 29). Neoliberalism hence “enunciates (homo)sexual difference in the register of culture – a culture that is freely exchanged (purchased) and celebrated (consumed)” (30). Furthermore, Eng details how queer liberalism’s conditions of possibility sublate the relations between “whiteness, private property, and black racial trespass” that constitute its “material and ideological background” (2010: 36, see also 34-47). Eng details the incident with the police that incited the 2003 *Lawrence vs. Texas* case, which led to the decriminalisation of sodomy between consenting adults in private in the US, and which occurred after Lawrence’s partner Garner, a Black man, was reported to be in possession of a weapon. Eng argues that queer liberalism’s conditions of possibility can be seen to collaborate with Western liberalism’s “racialized genealogy of exploitation and domination”, of a society founded upon chattel slavery that continues to

reproduce racial hierarchies through a privileged norm in the law of whiteness as property as conceptualised by Cheryl Harris (1993, Eng 2010: 46-47).¹¹

Describing the development of discourses and policies of homosexual inclusion in the twenty-first century, with particular reference to the forms of national exceptionalism practiced in the United States, Jasbir Puar describes homonationalism as a “*brand* of homosexuality [that] operates as a regulatory script not only of normative gayness, queerness, or homosexuality, but also of the racial and national norms that reinforce these subjects” (2007: 2, emphasis added). Homonationalism emerges in this context through a rhetorical and legal “alliance” between homosexuality, the nation state and the “global dominant ascendancy of whiteness” (2), forged in the context of the post-9/11 (so-called) ‘War on Terror’ as a neo-imperialist and neoliberal endeavour. Puar emphasises that the folding into life of homosexual subjects via an American sexual exceptionalism operates through “a praxis of sexual othering”, whereby an “Orientalist”, “Muslim sexuality” is constructed as Other and attached to the figure of the terrorist – a praxis in its most extreme manifestation in the sexual torture of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib (4, 79-113). Puar’s work importantly attends to the flows and expansion of capital through homonationalist politics imagined and enacted by governments, although in a post-Marxist lineage citing Hardt and Negri, the nation is the master term of her analysis (2007).

Transnormativity, a term recently cognised in transgender studies, describes the process “whereby certain transgender bodies are valued, counted, recognized, and folded into citizenship, while others are marginalized,

¹¹ Eng concludes that queer liberalism “colludes with liberal distinctions between family and the state” and “underwrites the very inclusion of queers *and* queers of color” within its forms (2010: 45-46, emphasis added).

rendered abject, excluded, and made vulnerable to violence and premature death” (Kunzel 2014: 287). Furthermore, I have described trans liberalism as a politics that proposes trans rights as “*the solution* to the problems facing trans people”, to “enable our participation in (Western) capitalist society;” and which proposes, “alongside rights, positive media representation [as] the best method to win over the cisgender world and improve the standing of trans subjects within the multicultural diversity of an apparently equal society” (Raha 2015).

Furthermore, the twenty-first century has seen the proliferation of commercial support and funding of Gay Pride parades by multinational businesses in certain parts of the globe (Gay Pride parades meeting with serious state repression in some places, such as Russia, Serbia and Turkey), coupled to new innovations in state and corporate pinkwashing (Puar 2010). Pinkwashing describes the promotion of a gay friendly image while obscuring structural and foundational issues that adversely affect groups, including poor and racialised LGBTQ people. In Puar’s words – addressing strategies of the Israeli state while continuing to occupy and perpetrate humanitarian crimes against Palestinians, including LGBT people – “to be gay friendly is to be modern, cosmopolitan, developed, first-world, global north, and, most significantly, democratic” (Puar 2010). As Rahul Rao argues, international finance institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have highlighted the economic impact of homophobia, which “obscure[s] the material conditions that incubate homophobic moral panics, and [the financial institutions’] own culpability in co-producing those conditions” (2015: 38). Rao delineates an ascendant “global homocapitalism” backed by moral claims from such institutions and led by a “transnational capitalist class”, that “repackag[es] queer normativity in recognizably local idioms with which those outside this

class can identify or aspire to inhabit" (48).¹² These twenty-first century neoliberal transformations have created new methods for capitalist accumulation through queer and trans bodies and lives.

Writing in the United Kingdom in 2018, our contemporary neoliberal moment is one in which the entrenchment of social divestment and austerity measures has defined the daily lives (and, indeed, the deaths) of many LGBTQ people – especially for those who are also disabled, migrant, working class and/or people of colour – by precarious work (both waged and unwaged), precarious housing, precarious benefits, precarious healthcare, and precarious immigration status. Precarity has become an important term within European discourse – Lauren Berlant provides a taxonomy of precarity as indexing structural economic problems whereby bodies are worn out while given the “promise of flourishing”, “a problem of the reproduction of life (there are not enough hours in the day)”, “the privatisation of wealth and the slow and uneven bankrupting of ... localities (nations, states, regions)”, and “an existential problem” of life “without guarantees, just with more or less reliable infrastructures of continuity” (Puar 2012: 166). In common parlance among activists and workers, precarity describes forms of insecure labour practices – such as zero-hours, freelance, fixed-term or seasonal work – often offered in place of permanent or longer term contracts, to ensure that capitalists do not have an oversupply of labour.¹³ Since 2010, consecutive Conservative-led UK Governments have mandated austerity measures across public services (including social housing and the National Health Service (NHS)), while also restructuring and cutting

¹² Rao provides a critical reading of the IMF's *It Gets Better* video and of the critical, ‘pinkwashing’ version produced by Greek queer activists FYTA (2015: 39-41).

¹³ Precarity is also used to describe insecurity of tenure in housing, access to services and welfare.

welfare and social security benefits. This includes cuts to disability benefits, such as ending the Disability Living Allowance (DLA), the introduction of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) coupled to highly-criticised, barbaric regime of private assessments;¹⁴ the benefit sanction scheme, introduced in 2012, which gave welfare officers power to withhold benefits such as ESA and Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) from periods between seven weeks to two years for arbitrary reasons; the closure of over 350 Sure Start Centres, responsible for childcare provisions;¹⁵ cuts to Working Tax Credits; the introduction of limits to Housing Benefit Payments, a cap on total benefit payments and the highly criticised introduction of Universal Credit; cuts to Legal Aid services and the introduction of fees for Employment Tribunals (which address issues such as discrimination in the workplace); financial disinvestment in the NHS, opening up NHS service provision to competition from private providers, alongside the introduction of restrictions and costs to service users who don't have UK Citizenship, including passport checks at the point of access; cuts to HIV/ AIDS services, the refusal by NHS England to fund HIV prevention drugs PrEP and PEP in 2016, and the ongoing chronic under-resourcing of trans-specific healthcare services; cuts to domestic violence services; cuts in the voluntary sector, resulting in the closure of LGBT support services Pace and Broken Rainbow (Pitt (Cohen) and Monk, 2016); the fabrication and/or intensification of the 'Hostile Environment',

¹⁴ A recent Freedom of Information request to the Department for Work and Pensions revealed that, between 2014-17, 111,450 people had their claims for ESA closed due to mortality. Steven Preece (2018), 'DWP forced to admit more than 111,000 deaths', *Welfare Weekly*, 13 August 2018. Online at <https://welfareweekly.com/dwp-forced-to-admit-more-than-111000-benefit-deaths/>.

¹⁵ 'More than 350 Sure Start children's centres have closed since 2010' (2017) *The Guardian*, 2nd February 2017. Online at <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/feb/02/sure-start-centres-300-closed-since-2010>.

placing pressures on recent and long-term migrant people and asylum seekers by restricting access to jobs, housing, bank accounts, welfare, etc., through the introduction of mandatory passport checks; and the introduction of stringent, invasive and assimilationist demands on proof of one's sexuality for people seeking asylum for being LGBT.

As the work contained in the collection of poems and the theory developed throughout this creative and critical thesis demonstrate, these forms of social disinvestment have had a profound impact on queer and trans life across this decade – affecting the possibilities and opportunities for life, while withholding essential means for life, independence and self-expression and fabricating stress and anxiety. These are the transformations which queer Marxism, as theory and poetics, must understand and ground with the critique of capitalist political economy, while elaborating praxis to engender queer and trans life.

I.2 What is queer Marxism?

Queer theory engaging with Marxism has reinvigorated key Marxist concepts by grounding theories of sexuality and queer and trans histories, cultures and texts into histories and readings of capitalist social transformation and accumulation. This includes the Marxist concepts of the commodity, value, labour, the gendered and racial division of labour, totality, reification, surplus population, primitive accumulation, racial capitalism, crisis, history and capital. These concepts have been engaged with to varying degrees of detail and Marxist orthodoxy, by drawing from different eras in Marx's (and Marxist) thought – at times from the optimistic Young Marx of the 1844 *Philosophic and Economic Manuscripts* (1959), from the revolutionary Marx and Engels of *The*

German Ideology and *The Communist Manifesto*, from the Marx of *Capital*. Queer Marxists also draw strongly from twentieth century Marxist figures such as Georg Lukács, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch and C.L.R. James. As I detail in Chapter 1, Gayatri Spivak's reading of Marx's labour theory of value (1988) has a profound influence on queer Marxism's conception of value. Furthermore, while often not directly cited, the strong influence of Louis Althusser's critique of ideology (1971) is evident in some contributions (Ferguson 2004, Liu 2015). The aforementioned Marxist concepts have been studied and applied to deepen important current subjects within queer theory, including the history of sexuality, utopia (of course also a subject of Marxism), affect, queer of colour critique and race, embodiment, gender, activism, and the political economy of sexuality more broadly. For instance, the influential work of Floyd (2009) and Hennessy (2000) connects the transformations of discourses of sexuality (of sexology and psychoanalysis) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century with developments in capitalist production and consumption. Hennessy and Floyd deploy Georg Lukács' theory of reification (1971), a touchstone for the development of Western Marxism in the interwar period, to theorise the reification of sexual subjectivity and sexual desire (I discuss this work at length in Chapter 1).

The variation in Marxist orthodoxy has had a positive influence on the development of queer Marxism within queer theory, allowing for heterogeneity in critical and theoretical approaches in the uptake of Marxist concepts. Indeed, as Floyd writes, queer Marxism pushes Marxism "to speak to certain dimensions in social and historical reality powerfully illuminated in queer theory's relatively brief history, dimensions that Marxism has little history of acknowledging, much less examining" (2009: 2, 4). The endeavour to challenge

the epistemological limits of Marxism has been particularly fruitful in the development and uptake of queer of colour critique as a mode of analysis, as I discuss below. However, queer Marxisms have at times foregone structural critique that connects queer life and culture to political economy and the critique of capital. In addition, the muted engagement between queer Marxisms themselves seems to have had an adverse effect on the theoretical consistency of, and collaboration within, the discipline. For instance, addressing early work by Floyd (1996), Hennessy highlights the lack of “studies that examine the historical relationship between the formation of new sexual identities and the reifying cultural logic of an emergent commodity culture” (2000: 97). This is the key thesis of Floyd’s *The Reification of Desire* (2009), which undertakes a detailed queer reading of Lukács as I detail in Chapter 1. However, Floyd’s text only minimally attends to the important queer Marxist work of Hennessy (2000), Joseph (2002), Tinkcom (2002) and Ferguson (2004).¹⁶ Such a lack of engagement with other queer Marxist texts has undoubtedly affected the development of the field within queer theory.

An example of the theoretical heterogeneity of queer Marxism is found in the roundtable discussion ‘Queer studies, materialism, and crisis’ in the *GLQ* special issue (Crosby et al. 2012). The discussion pays particular attention to queer Marxism’s “orientation to political-economic questions” (127), utopia and totality, racial capitalism and capital’s need to make certain bodies disposable in its pursuit of accumulation. The discussion brings together prominent contributors to queer Marxism and queer theorists addressing class and queer

¹⁶ This comment is not intended as an accusation. Hennessy had a significant role in providing critical comments to Floyd’s text (Floyd 2009: 227), and Floyd briefly engages with Joseph’s reading of Judith Butler’s theory of gender performativity (101-102). Floyd’s constellation of queer Marxist and materialist texts is in a footnote (2, ftnt 4).

liberalism. Floyd explicitly historicises the uptake of certain concepts in queer theory, such as utopia in the work of Muñoz (2009) and Edelman (2004), as “symptomatic of a moment in which capital’s colonization of the future appears both unassailable, as a familiar neoliberal narrative would have it [... and] transparently violent in a way that may suggest the opposite: accumulation’s radical fragility” (Crosby et al. 2012: 128). On this point, he emphasises that Marxism and queer studies arrive at the same conclusions. Furthermore, building upon his reconsideration of totality in *The Reification of Desire*, Floyd asks “Can one ‘re-pos[e] the question of totality’ without implicating oneself in an imperial, American universalism?”, and while gesturing towards Marx’s value-form highlights the “problem of grasping the ways in which capitalism’s gendered, racialized and sexualized violence is inseparable from ... *capitalism’s simultaneous identity and nonidentity with itself*” (138, emphasis added). Two contributors strongly emphasise the relationship between capitalism, racialization and queer studies’ address of marginalised figures and groups. Lisa Rofel emphasises the importance of a queer hermeneutics for understanding capitalism’s drive for universality across “Euro-American metropolises” which is “undone by the ‘difference’” of the history of the “postcolonies”, and for understanding the relation between the value form, bodies and the value of marginalised lives (129). On the subject of racial capitalism, Fred Moten emphasises, citing Cedric Robinson (1983), the centrality of “racism not as capitalism’s instrument but as its conditions of possibility”, alongside the role of “regulative desire” in the pursuit of capitalist accumulation (130). Robert McRuer emphasises queer theory’s interest in “provid[ing] some account of capitalist modernity, neoliberalism, or globalization” must necessarily address “the invalidated and unthinkable”, crip “figures that are sick, infected, deranged, addicted, scarred, wounded, or

traumatized" (131). He notes that queer Marxism must remain invested in crip and Mad bodies and lives (as I consider in Chapter 4). Dean Spade's contributions describe the pain of the NGO-industrial-complex's "eclipse" of grassroots LGBT activism, which has transformed queer politics into "a site for building white power" (135) through carceral regimes and non-redistributive equality politics, and highlights the importance of a critical trans politics that cognises "the material conditions of existence and the distribution of life chances" (143). In contrast to these approaches that connect the structural forces of capitalism globally to contemporary narratives of development, the transformation of queer politics by capital, and the situation of marginal queer lives within these contexts, Heather Love details her interest in working-class queer writing, sometimes by writers of colour, which "focuses on the lived experience of structural inequality" (131). For Love, this work however decentres its focus on capital and "can seem to lack a revolutionary horizon" (131). She emphasises that "this refusal of the choice between revolution and capitulation is what makes this tradition queer".¹⁷ Love's pessimism seems to miss the potential of reading or theorising such lived experience into materials and ammunition of queer Marxism.

In her significant contribution to queer Marxism, *Against the Romance of Community*, Miranda Joseph (2002) elucidates the complicity of the idea of community – among queer people in particular – in strategies of capitalist accumulation, including marketing strategies of products for lesbian and gay consumers. Critiquing nineteenth-century liberal definitions of 'community', at

¹⁷ Love names the writing of Cherríe Moraga, Audre Lorde, Leslie Feinberg's *Stone Butch Blues*, Eileen Myles's *Chelsea Girls*, and work by Cathy Cohen and Eli Clare. Much of this literature could speak directly to queer Marxism in that is committed to forms of revolutionary transformation that combat capitalism.

the root of late twentieth-century conservative and nationalist deployments of its idea, Joseph argues that “the elaboration of the community group as a distinct, different, particular community makes it available for insertion into a particular slot in the hierarchy of capitalist exploitation” (29). Reading across Marx’s oeuvre, she describes how the evolution of modes of production enable new social formations, which have enabled strategies of “flexible specialisation” in capital’s pursuit of accumulation (47-49). One such strategy is niche marketing to gay consumers by invoking the abstraction of community, while obscuring queer people’s relations to production and the conditions of community production. Following Marx’s comments on consumption in the *Grundrisse* – whereby the commodity “becomes” a product in the act of consumption, receiving its “last finish” (1973: 91, cited in Joseph 2002: 42) – Joseph argues that the identity-conferring aspects of consumption mask the fact that a consumer is “free of, short of, the means to meet her needs without choosing a commodity [that] contributes to the accumulation of capital” (43). Acts of consumption consolidate “the power of the owners of the means of production” and “enact the cultural and social formation in which her choices are embedded but she does not control” (43-44). Furthermore, Joseph proposes an expanded definition of production to account for “labor as all human doing and not just contributions to the gross national product”, including “activities that go on outside the factory” and “even beyond the commodity, which has become, in any case, less and less material” (32). Emphasising the *performative* character of production (which includes its influence on social formations), she suggests “gender occurs through productive practices, through the performance—the enactment, witnessed and inscribed monetarily or not—of production” (39), and proposes that queer sexual practices are important in

social reproduction. Joseph importantly highlights that accumulation is now dependent on diverse social bodies (40, citing Harvey, 'The Body as Accumulation Strategy', 1998), hence capital must address minority communities such as gay and lesbian consumers in our particularity.

In regards to performance, queer Marxism has synthesised considerations of the performance or production of gender expression, gendered divisions of labour and Marx's labour theory of value. In her essay on "queer value", Meg Wesling considers forms of labour "that go beyond subsistence and reproduction ... that we would want to acknowledge as labour" (2012: 108), through reading the feminine gender expressions of *transformistas* documented in the Cuban film *Mariposas en el Andamio* (1996). This suggestion seems to posit an expanded definition of social reproduction: as I theorise in Chapter 2, such an expansion of social reproduction is necessary for the conceptualisation of the forms of caring labour and gender labour undertaken daily by queer and trans people and communities. Like much work within queer Marxism, Wesling's essay hinges upon Gayatri Spivak's re-reading of Marx's value theory (as a 'Value Theory of Labour', Spivak 1988), which, as I argue in Chapter 1, has significant implications for the consideration of economic value within queer Marxism. Furthermore, in her important retooling of Jay Prosser's concept of 'second skins', Rosemary Hennessy conceptualises the relationship between the abjection of feminised bodies (including that of gay and gender non-conforming people) and the value of their labour power, and argues that cultural values have concrete, material implications in economic spheres of value (2013). For Hennessy, this is exemplified in the poor treatment and low wages of gay *maquiladora* workers on the Mexican *frontera*: Hennessy details their collective challenges to their employers through trade unions.

Petrus Liu's *Queer Marxism in Two Chinas* (2015) provides an important account of the critical role of queer Marxism, retooling the discipline by centring its geopolitical perspective on the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC). Liu argues that queer theory's critique of the "foundational ethnocentrism of the West" – specifically addressing Butler's *Gender Trouble* – constructs the East as beyond the "epistemological limits of Western reason" (24). This plays out in works such as that of Eve Sedgwick, David Halperin and Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, whereby such epistemological Othering leads to a perceived "incommensurability between East and West" (26) and thus such work inadvertently reproduces a liberal pluralist logic (21-30). Liu asserts that it is "ethically imperative" for queer theory to include this "Other" and to avoid reproducing this figuration of "Other" (30). In challenging the Eurocentric epistemes of both queer theory and queer Marxism, Liu's book provides significant insights into how queer Marxism can be used to challenge governmental forms of neoliberal homonormativity globally; and to understand the social transformations of the two Chinas (the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan) – particularly in regard to recent social legitimacy of *Tongzhi*¹⁸ grounded in social respectability, and the institutionalisation of conservative feminism in Taiwan.

Liu emphasises the radicality of sexual abjection as a means to disrupt conservative social orders as both conceived within Marxism and in contemporary neoliberal and state-regulated capitalist economies. Furthermore, he argues that the totalising conflations of Marxism with socialist planning in

¹⁸ Liu writes that *tongzhi* has an analogous function to queer in English, as an appropriation of 'comrade' "by Chinese sexual countercultures to refer to same-sex love", which in addition parodies Sun Yet-sen and Maoist Socialism (2015: 41-42).

China has rendered illegible – to the perspective of the West – postwar queer Marxisms elaborated by Chinese queer theorists and cultural producers, “who occupy a variety of political positions that may be at odds with the ‘actually existing Marxism’ of the [PRC]” (9). Liu presents an archive of such work contra Western queer theory, which he argues

share two assumptions: that capitalism is the exclusive property of Euro-American modernity, and that Marxism is a closed system incapable of dealing with the complexities of modern life (such as sexuality) and therefore needs to be ‘queered’ (2015: 8-9).

Liu’s archive includes the films and theory of Cui Zi’en, the feminist theory of Josephine Ho, Ding Naifei and the Gender/Sexuality Rights Association, Taiwan (G/SRAT), the fiction of Chen Ruoxi and the critical work of Lisa Rofel. Liu emphasises that such theorists and cultural producers approach Marxism as a methodology and “living philosophy” (9). Liu emphasises that such queer Marxist writers “analyze the field of socioeconomic conditions in which desire, pleasure, intimacy, human connectedness, and permissible speech become possible,” elucidating “how such social relations are reproduced along unequal axes of power for differently positioned human beings” (2015: 31). For Liu, queer Marxism

engages questions of location and situatedness without reifying alterity. The point is neither to return to the primacy of economic determinants by reinstating an intellectual foundationalism for queer theory, nor to reiterate a moralistic critique of bourgeois consumption brought about by transnational capitalism. Rather, queer Marxism emphasizes the possibilities of *systematic analysis* in investigating those configurations of gender, sexuality, and social power that liberals characterize as mere contingencies (2015: 31).

Hence, queer Marxism’s systematic analysis of power relations mediated by capital provides a challenge to liberal social policy and other discourses that naturalise neoliberal socioeconomic conditions in their analysis. Liu’s body of queer Marxist theory, political interventions and cultural production

furthermore shows the power of queerness, when deployed to such ends, to destabilise heteronormativity, capitalist kinship relations, and socially conservative political programmes. Liu argues that “against the capitalist reification of identities” – which has produced a liberal pluralist politics that focuses on social change through legal rights – Chinese queer theorists “redefine queerness as a critical relation to power” (40). Queerness is here conceived as a “material remainder of one’s relation to an unequal structure of power, as well as a capacity to recognize the distance between the diversity of erotic desires, genders, identities, and intimacies in human cultures” (40), which, as Liu demonstrates, can be mobilised to disrupt the social order. Describing them as “outrageously playful, hypersexual, in-your-face, shocking and perverse” (50), Liu shows how Cui Zi’en’s films deploy queerness as a means to resist a mass consumption – by refusing audience identification, representing sexual perversity and taboos, mobilising spontaneity through unscripted roles, deploying unpolished aesthetics, cinematography and sound, and refusing Soviet aesthetics and American finance (48-58).¹⁹

Furthermore, Liu presents Josephine Ho’s influential sex-positive feminism, which in the context of the ROC argues that sexual normativity consolidates gender normativity, whereby “normative gender is predicated on an unequal distribution of economic and symbolic resources between subjects of different genders” (Liu 2015: 64).²⁰ Ho’s *The Gallant Woman* foregrounds the potential of women’s sexual agency as a means of overcoming the “gendered

¹⁹ The subjects of Cui’s films include “transvestites, voyeurs, boy toys, creepy uncles, gay-for-pay evangelists, bi-curious straight men”, male sex workers, “dinosaurs”, “extra-terrestrials”, etc. (49).

²⁰ Ho’s feminist “inaugurated the sexual liberation movement with the slogan, ‘I want orgasms (xing gaochao), not harassment (xing saorao)’ as a challenge to Taiwanese state feminism, which in Liu’s reading has “introduced the formal freedom of gender” but not “freedom from gender” (2015: 62-63).

vulnerabilities” imposed by capitalist modernity.²¹ Rather than “becoming ‘winners’ by reversing the structure of power”, Ho argues that women can unlearn the “psychic structure[s] of shame” which form part of an “auto-commodification of their bodies” within cultures of capitalist exchange by “becoming active subjects of desire” (66-67). Here, queerness demonstrates alternate “social configuration(s) of bodies and desires” that reveal and challenge dichotomies of “good verses bad sex” (67). Liu also presents the work of Ding Naifei, and the Gender/Sexuality Rights Association Taiwan (G/SRAT), which elucidates the “mutually embedded” character “of the stigma of sex and the stigma of labor”, within a hierarchical social division of labour (75). This historical process produces “abject beings” as negative queer subjects, “rendered inarticulate and unrecognizable” by this stigma (75).²²

Queer Marxists across the two Chinas thus enact refusals of identification/identity – mobilising female agency, perversions and the differences constituting ‘bad’ sexual subjects and erotic desires, within cultural production and through political activity. While refusing the terms of sexual regulation and governmentality of neoliberal states, queer Marxism in the two Chinas elucidates the structural and political dynamics that consolidate sexual and gender normativity. This operates through a social division of labour that stigmatises labour and sexual activity through abject queers; although the queer excess of such abjection becomes a means by which to challenge these state.

²¹ Ho, Josephine Chuen-juei. *Haoshuang nüren* [The gallant woman: Feminism and sexual emancipation]. Taipei, Taiwan: Crown Publishers, 1994. All citations are from Liu (2015).

²² Ding characterises such subjects as “rats and flies”, who in turn deploy tactics learned from pests to frustrate state feminisms and to demonstrate that they cannot be regulated or outlawed.

Key contributions to queer Marxism have addressed abjection through the consideration of feminised, labouring figures in Marx's texts, in particular sex workers. It is in the centring of and focus on such figures that this work has made significant contributions to Marxist feminist thought. For instance, in her chapter on 'The Value of Second Skins' – which I discuss at length in Chapter 1 – Rosemary Hennessy proposes that “the ‘queer commodity’” in Marx is indeed “the ‘queer commodity’ of labor power” (2013: 140). In the footnotes of *Capital* volume 1, this queer commodity materialises through the “*femmes folles de leur corps*” [‘women who are crazy with their bodies’, twelfth-century prostitutes], who are however exiled by Marx beyond the body of the text (140). Hennessy argues “their femininity is encoded in the *corps* that is inseparable from their labor and their persons, but the *folles* (madness) of their trade makes the attachment of *femmes* to *corps* a particularly improper one, marking them as loose women” (141). Furthermore, at the centre of Roderick Ferguson's detailing of a “gendered and eroticized history of U.S. racialization”, and the transformations of the conditions of labour across the twentieth century for “nonwhite populations” as populations often surplus to capital's requirements for labour (2004: 13, see 12-18), is the figure of the nineteenth-century Black prostitute. This figure is extrapolated from Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts* (1844) – Ferguson emphasises that for Marx, “[t]he commodity disrupts the moral parameters of subjectivity and agency”, which includes the “dehumanization” of man under capitalist relations of production (2004: 7-8). This is exemplified, for Marx, in prostitution, as “only a *specific* expression of the general prostitution of the laborer”, whereby the greatest “abomination” is that of the capitalist who “prostitutes” (Marx, 1844 *Manuscripts*, cited in Ferguson 2004: 7-8). Ferguson emphasises that Marx is here speaking of Man's feminization under capitalism, and details how the figure of the Black prostitute comes to

embody anxieties regarding the moral disruptions of rampant commodification and racialised anxieties regarding white working-class women's sexualities (see 7-10). Ferguson's *Aberrations in Black* opens with the contemporised figure of the Black drag queen prostitute as a contemporary embodiment of the anxieties of capital (1).²³ While historicising the discourses and divisions of labour through which such figures come to embody the anxieties of upper echelons of the capitalist social order – and how such figures come to bear the brunt of reactionary state policies – is important work, it is also important not to evacuate the agency of such figures (Lugones 2003) and to detail the material conditions of their labour and lives. My thesis pays particular attention to the feminisation of labour and the work feminised figures, from queer and trans agents of self-organised social reproduction in the activist groups Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries and Wages Due Lesbians (Chapter 2), to the work of John Wieners (Chapter 3) and Anne Boyer (Conclusion). Furthermore, in Chapter 5, I consider the disqualification and devaluation of the labour of feminized subjects with a focus on trans women and trans femmes.

It is through readings of these figurations in which queer Marxism elaborates the social relations that produce them, and evaporates, in Liu's work, the "illusion of an autonomous self in bourgeois society" (who appears to accrue wealth without impacting, or exploiting, others) (164-165). However, Liu's text closes with a reading of Marx's labour theory of value that addresses the figuration of the human in Marx that re-universalises the subject of labour. Liu writes:

²³ I discuss Ferguson's figuration of the Black drag queen prostitute in much greater detail in Raha (forthcoming).

The concept of value describes the truly *transindividual* nature of the invisible and unequal mechanisms for redistributing social resources... The observation that any given commodity contains a quantum of labor from an unknown producer, who is in turn sustained by the labors of other unknown producers, allows Marx to make the argument that human beings are reproduced by an infinite aggregate of labors beyond the immediate scenes of production and direct exchange. The recognition of the invariability and indestructability of value binds all of us to other human beings we do not know (165, author's emphasis).

The identical character of value embodied in commodities, which I consider at length below, is for Liu an indication of how “unknowable others” are implicated in the “formation of the self” (165). The figure of the human in Marx as a social relation is thus (re)produced dialectically in a manner not immediately perceptible to a subject (167). Liu claims that this figure is “already queered” as it is formed as “an effect of unanticipated forms of intimacy, desire and connectedness in the world” (164-165). The abstraction of such a formulation removes the concrete bodies, labour and lives that are exploited under capitalism's racial and gendered divisions of labour. I make a similar yet distinct argument in Chapter 1, in regards to Marx's dialectic of the ‘natural form’ and ‘value form’ of the commodity in *Capital* volume 1 (1990). While some forms of queerness are undoubtedly “unanticipated” within capitalist societies, to argue that the figure of the human (as defined by Marxism) is both universal and queer effaces the same particularities that give Liu's queer Marxist abject figures their disruptive potential.

Queer of colour critique has made important contributions to the critical and methodological elaboration of queer Marxism, in particular in the work of Roderick Ferguson (2004), David Eng (2010), José Esteban Muñoz (2009) and Anna M. Agathangelou, M. Daniel Bassichis and Tamara Spira (2008). Ferguson highlights the importance of developing queer of colour critique as a critical

method that “disidentifies²⁴ with historical materialism to *rethink* its categories and how they might conceal the materiality of race, gender and sexuality” in order to “determin[e] the silences that reside within [historical materialism’s] critical terrains” (2004: 5, original emphasis). Ferguson emphasises that in contrast to liberal pluralist analysis, queer of colour critique pursues “an understanding of nation and capital as the outcome of manifold intersections that contradict the idea of the liberal nation-state and capital as sites of resolution, perfection, progress and confirmation” (3). In comparison to queer theories focused primarily on the master term of nation through a post-Marxist or Deleuzoguattarian lens, such as Puar (2007), the attention to *capital* in Ferguson’s analysis provides an important contribution to the critique of racial capitalism. Ferguson emphasises the constitutive role that “the discourses of race, gender and sexuality” have on capital, while states mobilise capital in their attempt to universalise and normalise certain sexualities (11). By considering “the multiplication of racialized discourses of gender and sexuality and the multiplication of labor under capital” (12), Ferguson details how transformations of capital produce and influence heterogeneous social formations including queer of colour formations.

Muñoz’s *Cruising Utopia* elaborates rich, if brief, readings of Ernst Bloch and C.L.R. James, in order to conceptualise and locate concrete utopian moments within queer lives that slip into the not-yet-conscious and no-longer-conscious (2009). Furthermore, in his study of poet Claude McKay, Gary Edward

²⁴ Muñoz theorises disidentification as “the hermeneutical performance of decoding mass, high, or any cultural field from the perspective of a minority subject who is disempowered in a representational hierarchy” (Muñoz 1999: 25, quoted in Ferguson 2004: 4). Ferguson emphasises the immanent character of disidentification, as such cultural “fields account for the queer of colour subject’s historicity” (2004: 4).

Holcomb delineates the queerness of McKay's Black Marxism, itself an innovation on *négritude*. Holcomb argues that "[o]ne may not grasp his black Marxism without perceiving the author's radical disposition toward the use of the sexualised black male worker's body in capitalist production and colonialist mastery" (2007: 14).

Work within queer Marxism has also recounted theories of sexuality and capitalism from the New Left and the Gay Liberation movements in the US and UK of the late '60s and early '70s, such as that of Herbert Marcuse (Floyd 2009: 120-153; Hennessy 2000: 42-49) and Mario Mieli (2018), whose writings are rooted in historicising and materialist readings of Freudian psychoanalysis; and Guy Hocquenghem, whose work explicates critiques of capitalism and the family through a radical gay male sexual politics rooted in Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (Hocquenghem 1993).

Furthermore, work within Marxism has begun to address the history and material implications of queer sexualities, producing particularly important accounts of queer involvement in union organising and the intersectional implications of this for anti-capitalist struggle. This includes the work of Alan Sears (2006, 2015), who highlights the limitations of gains in lesbian and gay legal rights at a national level, in comparison to gains made through union organising in the workplace (such as access to one's partner's health insurance). Moreover, Holly Lewis (2015) draws together strands of Marxist feminism's social reproduction theory, transfeminism and queer theory to synthesise a queer Marxist feminism rooted in socialist internationalism. Like Hennessy and Floyd, Peter Drucker (2015) historicises developments in theories of sexuality, queer subjectivity and liberal and assimilationist LGBT politics through periods of capitalist development, to argue that capitalism influences

and shapes these social formations. Given the focus of my thesis on the uptake of Marxism within queer theory in the twenty-first century, and given that work in Marxism addressing sexuality (with the exception of Lewis) has tended to sideline the contributions of queer theory to anti-capitalist critique,²⁵ I will not address New Left, Freudo-Marxist or these contemporary Marxist writings in detail.

As Floyd notes, queer Marxism's "antiheteronormative critique of capital" must operate through "two potentially contradictory horizons: the impact on queer social life of contemporary regimes of capital accumulation, and the abiding sense of Marxism's blind spots that informed queer thought from the beginning" (2009: 3). It is clear that a queer theory grounded in Marxism, necessarily produced by, considering and addressing subjects who are bodies of divergent knowledge and experience from those typically associated with historical or dialectical materialism (in terms of sexuality, gender/gender identity, race, class, ability), must critique the contradictions of these discourses which arise through the materiality of such experience, by putting dialectical materialism as the service of queer lives. Furthermore, discussing the relation between capital and normativity, Ferguson writes that "[w]ithin this historic moment characterized by the normalization of racialized class formations, we need modes of analysis that can address normativity as an object of inquiry and critique" (2004: 148). It has been argued that this moment – the first decades of

²⁵ My critique here is informed through interventions I made over numerous years (2012-15) at the *Historical Materialism*, London Conference, held every November at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London – within the sexual politics panel, which then developed into the Sexuality and Political Economy Network (HMSPEN), organised by Paul Reynolds. See my paper 'Queer Marxism and the Task of Contemporary Queer Social Critique' (presented at the conference in 2014) and Chapter 2 of this thesis, a draft of which was presented at the conference in 2015.

the twenty-first century – is one that is intent on normalising queerness, gender deviance and trans experience, and the experience of disability through a liberal and seemingly classless politics of social inclusion (McRuer 2011/12). As I argue in this thesis, the normalisation of such experience through the flows of capital entails the transformation of difference through the reproduction of difference by the means of the reproduction of value – that is, as capital expands through queer lives and culture in pursuit of accumulation, the cultural signifiers of queerness and the positions of queer lives are transformed. In the manner that queer theory has “consistently maintained that any representation of sexuality in isolation from ... other dimensions of the social,” that “any representation of sexuality as always already localized, particularized, or privatized, is a misrepresentation of the social as well as the sexual” (Floyd 2009: 8),²⁶ queer Marxism must make the fundamental claim that the isolation of capital and the economic sphere from contemporary epistemologies of the social and the sexual is also a misrepresentation of their existence.

The scope of intellectual engagement of the queer Marxisms outlined above is further reflected in different methodological approaches. For instance, Hennessy (2000) and Joseph (2002) root their approach in a historical materialist method, in Hennessy’s case explicitly allied to Marxist feminism, cognising the transformations of social formations in accordance with transformations in capitalist relations of production and consumption. Hennessy’s later work (2013) develops a mixed queer method building in interviews and textual

²⁶ Floyd emphasises the importance of queer theory’s resistance to a logic of minoritisation (in the work of Warner (1993), Sedgwick (1988) and Edelman (2004)) and its similarity to Marxism in providing a particular vantage for the theorisation of social totalities (2009: 7-9).

analysis, synthesizing arguments from such sources and from queer theory. In comparison, Floyd (2009), Ferguson (2004) and Holcomb (2007) deploy literary critical and cultural studies approaches that construct historical arguments and relating these to contemporaneous developments in Marxist theory or social theory. Liu's work addresses specific texts and theories of cultural producers and critics, orienting these in the context of historical developments under Chinese communism (2015), while Muñoz carefully selects and deploys Marxian arguments – that may even be momentary – in order focus the utopian aspects of these challenges to capitalist society and relations of production. This variety of methodological approaches undoubtedly widens the scope of possibility for queer Marxist thought, while refusing the limits of sectarianism to particular thinkers or theorists. In what follows, I elaborate a 'queer hi[r]storical materialist' methodology that broadly captures my approach to queer Marxism.

I.3 Queer Hi[r]storical Materialism as method

Remember that thing Marx says near the end of Capital about how our struggles are excised and erased for dominant narratives, but how ‘the history of this ... expropriation [of the oppressed], is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire’? We’re still looking for that bloody reading practice, aren’t we (Rosenberg 2015, quoting Marx 1990).

*Claude Cahun in black
bloc scratches the face off a defender of
the nation, have you a finger or a wish
to be rushed to hospital in a panic but it
is all fine and actually I did enjoy trampling
those flowers as the cops screamed*

*my pronouns, looking back on it I did
enjoy him sometimes (Uziell, ‘Bloc’ 2017: 7).*

In his essay on “the secret history of testosterone” that situates criminalisation and surgical dissection in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century London as part of a transgender genealogy, Jordy Rosenberg (2015) deploys key historical materialist arguments (Marx 1990, Benjamin, ‘Thesis on the Philosophy of History’, 1999) to serve a trans-masculine Marxist history towards a politics of prisoner solidarity. Rosenberg’s critical and creative essays, which constellate both personal and speculative histories with a rich politicised bravado (see also Rosenberg 2018), make strong hints towards what might be formulated as a queer and/or trans hi[r]storical materialist method. Writing of the roots of the identification and isolation of the chemical compound of testosterone in “an anatomical genealogy of criminal dissection”, he argues:

History is not, at its heart, some telic journey where we track the wretched annals of capitalist accumulation into the present. Rather, ‘history’ is nothing more than the political²⁷ contingencies that have interrupted and shaped it.... I suppose this is something of what

²⁷ I read Rosenberg’s use of “political” to describe both formal Political struggles and broader politicised social struggles and grassroots organising.

Benjamin meant about looking backwards while being blown forwards: that the past awakens only under the pressure of the political present. If only now do the insurgent, collective burials of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seem part of some transgender genealogy, it is because today's insurgent, collective relationship to counterknowledges and practices press down upon the past to release its hidden message. *We are in solidarity with all prisoners* (2015, original emphasis).

In the context of the recent rise to power of ethno-nationalists and white supremacists across the globe, the type of insurgent reading practice Rosenberg describes through the image of Benjamin's "angel of history" – blown forwards by the "storm... we call progress", looking backwards, watching the catastrophe pile up (1999: 249) – seems all the more urgent. How does the deployment of queer history through a lens which disidentifies with historical materialism provide new materialist readings? This is given the burial and erasure of queer and trans histories/hirstories²⁸ by hetero- and cis-sexism, racism, white supremacy and ableism; and furthermore, given revisionist LGBT histories that have neglected the radicality of queer and trans histories, particularly as anti-colonial, revolutionary herstories.²⁹ A radical queer and trans hi[r]storical materialist methodology may necessarily challenge these constructions of history – elucidating challenges to structural hierarchies, right-wing politics and capitalist dispossession rooted in the lives, sociality, politics and sexual practices of queer and trans people. As our current historical moment bears a striking resemblance to that of Benjamin's "moment of danger" (in Benjamin's case, of ascendent National Socialism in Germany) – which "affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers" (247) – such a

²⁸ In a definition of 'h/story / hirstory', Flo Brooks writes: "*noun* : an alternative spelling of history, some trans and queer folks spell the word with a '/' or with a 'r' as a form of empowerment to move away from the 'his' in the 'traditional' spelling of history" (2017: 54).

²⁹ I consider this in relation to the herstory and political praxis of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries in Chapter 2.

method may ally historical materialism's imperative to "brush against the grain" of civilisation to queer and trans culture as a "tradition of the oppressed" (248), to here "seize hold of a [queer] memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger" (247).

As in the stanza cited above from contemporary UK poet Laurel Uziell (2017: 6-7) – where queer, gender non-conforming, Jewish artist and Nazi camp survivor Claude Cahun adopts a cloak of the vacuum beyond visible light ("black") and of anarchist anonymity ("black / bloc") to challenge fascists marching in contemporary Europe – poetry can be an important site for the animation of queer and trans memory. In Uziell's poem, the speaker/Cahun and their comrades³⁰ ("Dubious angels") clash violently with fascists and the police, as tensions are reflected through the language of "panic" and the verbs "rushed", "trampling" and "screamed", before the speaker sarcastically claims "but it / is all fine", like the meme of the dog drinking tea within a house on fire. In such a moment of policing, gendering on the terms of the state ("Plumbs your gender for clues, or / plumbs for clues to your gender") and the possession of one's own personal pronouns seem up for grabs, one step from being arrested and hauled into a police van like a Stonewall combatant. Queer and trans memory are likewise important potential sites of counterknowleges in my project. As I argue in my work on John Wieners (in particular in Chapter 4, 'The Survival of John Wieners'), the convergence of the institutional forces of psychiatry, the state and the family forced the poet through numerous psychiatric incarcerations across the 1960s and into the 1970s – which, according to Wieners, destroyed his memory.

³⁰ "Qomrade" is a portmanteau of queer and comrade used within the LGBTQ Left. It emerges out of a meme in which the acronym 'LGBTQ' is given as 'Lets Guillotine the Bourgeoisie Tonight, Qomrade'.

In addition, Rosenberg's work suggests the possibility of synthesising queer temporality studies, queer theory's affective turn, and the power of historical materialism's dialectical analysis to create a queer historical materialism that challenges linear and hetero- and cisnormative temporalities of life, and liberal narrations of social progress that are allied with capitalist development. Such a synthesis would do well to consider Heather Love's pivotal book *Feeling Backwards* (2007), in which she argues for the political importance of not casting off the negative emotions, such as shame, sadness and longing, and the difficult, messy attachments that characterise queer literature of the Modernist period. Arguing that "earlier forms of feeling, imagination and community may offer crucial resources in the present", Love "insist[s] on the importance of clinging to ruined identities and to histories of injury" (30). She writes that "[r]esisting the call of gay normalization means refusing to write off the most vulnerable, the least presentable, and all the dead" (30). While Love's discussion of Benjamin's angel of history as a "preeminently backwards figure" who has seriously considered the implications of "being hurt" by the past (147-148), she dwells on the ambivalence of the angel as a political actor. Love reads Wendy Brown and Carla Freccero's takes on the angel, and how the angel for Freccero "begs for a reprieve", "heads underground, and suspends each of the key terms of the passage—progress, agency, angel" (153, citing Freccero 2006).

Such a contradictory queer praxis – to cling to one's ruination and injuries; to centre those furthest from respectability politics and to head simultaneously underground *and* onto the streets – undergirds my readings of histories of queer and trans activism, also emerging within my poetics. In Chapter 2, I consider the work of Wages Due Lesbians and Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) – two groups active across the intersections of Lesbian

and Gay Liberation, sex worker activism and anti-colonial/Third World struggle, Wages Due Lesbians within an international Marxist feminist movement and STAR leading trans activism and prisoner solidarity within New York's Gay Liberation movement. Across Chapters 3 and 4, I consider the multifaceted work of gay femme poet John Wieners, in the context of Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation in Boston. These movements of the 1970s and 1980s enacted important ruptures in liberal narratives of social progress, advancing new political praxis, sexual attitudes and forms of social organisation that today may be read as exemplary of the potential of intersectional and coalitional movements. However, in focusing on the 1970s, primarily on the East Coast of the United States, it is not my intent to fetishise these histories or advocate a throwback to their tactics, or to ignore more recent political movements such as those against Austerity (IMF-imposed or state imposed), the Movement for Black Lives (Black Lives Matter), or movements against sexual violence such as #MeToo. My intention is to situate these movements through a queer historical materialist method that can inform how we read their texts, poetries, affective struggles and histories in *our* present, a present marked by new forms of commodification of LGBTQ life and new developments in LGBTQ and anti-racist/anti-xenophobic cultural and material struggles against the far right. Such contemporaneous moments of political rupture and affective upheaval are inscribed throughout in my poetic work, in poems such as '(Shoes, Danube)' (291) and "that fear bred by law &..." (309), alongside other work in the sequence 'of sirens / body & faultlines' (282-312).

I.4 Chapter Summaries

This critical and creative dissertation is divided into two sections: a critical thesis detailing and elaborating the theoretical developments of queer Marxism in the twenty-first century, undertaking historicising and theoretically informed readings of twentieth century and contemporary poetry and activism; and a creative portfolio consisting of a manuscript for a book of poems, *of sirens / body & faultlines*, which explores, develops and further posits a queer Marxist poetics. My critical work addresses archival documents, such as letters, journals, newspapers and magazines, historically situating and closely reading texts to elaborate the politics, poetics and imaginary that lie at their centre. This method of unearthing and elaborating intellectual histories/hirstories has been strongly influenced by the work of Christina Hanhardt (2013) and the work of other queer and trans historians such as Abraham Lewis (2016, 2017) and Tourmaline [Reina Gossett], Eric Stanley and Johanna Burton (2017).

The first chapter, “‘Natural form queers’: Reifications of desire and the value form of the commodity’, is focused on Marx’s elaboration of the commodity form, the foundation of *Capital*, Volume 1 (1990), and its significance for queer Marxist theory. Elaborating the rooting of Georg Lukács’ theory of reification (1971) in Marx’s theory of commodity fetishism, the chapter details the significant work of Kevin Floyd (2009) and Rosemary Hennessy (2000, 2013) that historicises the reification of sexual desire through developments of capitalist society through the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The interconnected character of Floyd and Hennessy’s arguments form a major intellectual contribution to queer Marxism. Furthermore, I detail Hennessy’s reformulation of Jay Prosser’s concept of a ‘second skin’, which theorises the relationship between cultural values, feminization, abjection and the value of

labour power (2013). Moving from these arguments, I undertake a detailed elaboration of Marx's dual character of the commodity form and the dialectic of the value form and the natural form of the commodity. I argue that this dialectic provides us with a means of understanding how queer commodities, labour and worlds are drawn into the abstractions of the commodity form, ultimately transforming these commodities and worlds, yet never completely. Providing a somewhat orthodox reading of Marx's labour theory of value, the chapter critically addresses Gayatri Spivak's influential reading of the labour theory of value in her essay 'Scattered Speculations on the question of Value' (1988). Spivak's essay, which is heavily cited by queer Marxists and across cultural studies more broadly, undertakes a deconstructive reading of the chains of abstraction that transform labour power and commodities into value. Spivak's essay also speculates on the relationship between affect and necessary labour under capitalism – an argument that has important implications for (queer) Marxist feminism.

Chapter 2 picks up on the questions of necessary labour, affect and queer and trans life through the framework of social reproduction, positing a theory of queer and trans social reproduction. Queer and trans social reproduction describes the labour undertaken to sustain queer and trans lives, worlds, bodies and sexualities under capitalism, where such labour has been historically erased, devalued or disqualified, and is most often undertaken for free. I argue that, in its focus on the reproduction of labour power, primarily through the hetero- and cis-normative nuclear family, Marxist feminism has neglected the specific forms of caring labour that animate queer and trans lives and worlds, alongside the influence of social and economic changes upon queer lives and domesticity. The chapter details work within queer studies, trans studies, and

Black feminism that has begun to address the labour of gender itself – the forms of routinized and extra-ordinary caring labour that animates gender expressions and bodies in excess of the gender binary, forms of labour that have often been collectivised. The chapter undertakes historical readings of the collective labour and political challenges inaugurated by two queer and trans activist groups – Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR, New York City, USA, active 1970-72) and Wages Due Lesbians (London, UK chapter, considering aspects of their activity form between 1985-1991) – both of whom challenged the routine devaluations of queer and trans life by the state and within capitalist society more generally. STAR enacted forms of collective care work that provided housing and support for poor, homeless, primarily Latinx, gay, trans and lesbian youth in New York; work that in turn was sustained by sex work and theft. Wages Due Lesbians, part of the International Wages for Housework Movement and an international organisation in their own right, made significant advances to Marxist feminist politics and theory by elaborating forms of ‘lesbian housework’ (1991) specific to the survival of lesbian and bisexual women in Britain under Margaret Thatcher in the late 1980s (the era of the Poll Tax and Section 28). My chapter provides an account of the intersectional, Marxist feminist, Third World revolutionary politics of these historical groups, which has been under-theorised in writing on the groups (Cohen 2008, Rousseau 2015).

The focus of Chapters 3 and 4 shift to situate the social and political worlds of John Wieners (1934-2002). Wieners’ reception within American poetry more broadly has been marginal since the 1970s. His work has received renewed critical attention in recent years, following the publications of *Supplication: Selected Poems of John Wieners* (2015) and *Stars Seen in Person: Selected Journals*

(2015), the first significant reprinting of his work since the 1980s and the first work under a primarily queer editorship since the 1970s. As I argue across these two chapters, hetero- and cis-sexism and sanism have undermined the twenty-first century critical reception of his poetry, while also marginalising the radicality of his poetics from the 1970s onwards, work that is strongly influenced by his involvement in the Gay Liberation movement and the Mental Patients' Liberation movement in Boston.³¹ Working from Wieners' personal archive and from alternative press archives from the 1960s and 1970s, these chapters historicise the scenes and politics of these liberation movements on a local and national scale, arguing that Wieners' poetry from the early 1960s – a period where poet faced psychiatric incarceration against his will – and the 1970s must necessarily be read through this context. Chapter 3 details Wieners' involvement with *Fag Rag*, a collectively produced radical gay male anarchist newspaper based in Boston, and the Good Gay Poets' collective, who published Wieners' 1975 collection *Behind the State Capitol; or Cincinnati Pike*. As Chapter 3 details, despite the pivotal role that *Fag Rag* and its Californian sibling newspaper *Gay Sunshine* played in spreading a radical political consciousness centred on the gay male body and life across North America, *Fag Rag* has received little critical attention in the histories of the 1970s and 1980s beyond work by Tatonetti (2014). I argue that the life and legacy of Wieners' work is (perfectly) bound to the queer labour of *Fag Rag* and Good Gay Poets and the social and extra-legal repression the collectives challenged and faced.

³¹ My reading of Wieners, situating his poetry and labour within the worlds fabricated by Boston's Liberation Movements, is intended to elaborate an alternative reading of Wieners to Keston Sutherland, who claims that "No poet in English was ever so destitute of a world as John Wieners" (2012: 1).

As I detail in Chapter 3, queer theorists have considered the relationship of labour and queerness, in part through Marx's formulation of the abstraction of labour (as labour power) under capital. Matthew Tinkcom theorises that through forms of "camp labor" (2002: 23), queer subjects of the 1950s were able to mark the products of their labour as camp, whereby the homogenising abstraction of the value form operates as a form of alibi for their homosexuality (2002). Furthermore, Gay community historian Allan Bérubé conceptualises forms of "queer work" through reading histories of gay sailors working on board cruise ships off the West Coast of the United States in the 1930s, detailing the queer cultures, labour struggles, and the racial and gendered divisions of labour on board the ships (2011: 261). Using this work to historically conceptualise forms of queer labour and its role in "queer world-making" (Berlant and Warner 1998), I argue that the work of gay liberation undertaken by Wieners, *Fag Rag* and Good Gay Poets form important examples of queer labour, responsible for inaugurating and spreading a world in which the ideals and praxis of gay liberation could flourish.

Introducing and adopting the critical perspective of Mad Studies – an activist and academic (in)discipline that challenges institutional perspectives on mental health, psychiatry and sanism, and affirms the methodological importance of madness (Ingram 2016: 13) – Chapter 4, 'The Survival of John Wieners' undertakes a reparative reading of Wieners' archives, journals, letters and poetics from the early 1960s, including correspondence between the poet and his mentor Charles Olson. The chapter historicises the critique of institutional psychiatry, its 'treatment' of gay men and gender non-conforming people, and the material and health problems created for psychiatric survivors as elaborated in contemporary Mad Studies and the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation

movements. Challenging critical readings that have naturalised the violence of psychiatric incarceration within Wieners' work (Wilkinson 2007), I read Wieners' archives to detail the violence he faced in 1960-61 during his first psychiatric incarcerations. Elaborating the importance of poetics in the poet's survival, I detail how Wieners' poetry from the period becomes a key site of queer memory, in the face of both poetry and memory's destruction at the hands of psychiatry. Following Wieners' final incarceration in Boston in 1972, I detail how the poet develops a radical liberation politics attested to in his poetry through his involvement in Gay Liberation and Mental Patients' Liberation, including collaborative work undertaken by the two movements in Boston. The chapter provides an account of this work, contextualising its radical political vision for the abolition of psychiatry and stopping the violence committed by psychiatrists under the banner of 'treatment', particularly against gay people, women and people of colour.³² I contextualise this position amid the work of American gay reform activists pushing for the depathologisation of homosexuality in the early 1970s and the hugely influential work challenging institutional psychiatry by Erving Goffman (1961) and Thomas Szasz (1960, 1970). At the basis of this work is the role of psychiatry as an institution functioning in service of capitalism's work ethics, consolidating social norms and the question of the valuation and abjection of bodies – particularly of bodies that are psychiatrised for being Mad, of colour, queer, and/or feminised. Against such violence and the destruction of his memory and poetry, as a person seemingly left with "A quart of champagne, one pill too many / and a paper from the state saying I am 'a mentally ill person'", Wieners and the

³² 'GML ZAPS Witchdoctors', *Fag Rag* (3, Summer 1972), 5.

liberation movements he was involved in pursued radically new forms of creative and political expression (1985: 195).

In Chapter 5, 'transfeminine brokenness, radical transfeminism', I argue that the affects of transfeminine life and their relationship to the material conditions undergirding such life are under-theorized in trans and queer studies. This creative and critical chapter conceptualizes transfeminine brokenness through negative experiences and emotions, drawing connections between such negative states to transmisogyny and material precarity. The chapter intends to politicise transfeminine brokenness for a radical *transfeminism*. I posit that the material basis of transfeminine brokenness involves the marginalisation of the labour of trans women and trans feminine people within a racialised and gendered division of labour under capitalism alongside the persistence of transmisogyny within queer, trans and feminist spaces and communities. The chapter defines radical transfeminism as a collective political praxis and critique that centres transfeminine bodies that are or find themselves precariously employed, poor, overworked and/or pathologised. Radical transfeminism is oriented around forms of care and support that include cultural production, political protest and solidarity and forms of socially reproductive labour amid conditions of material precarity. The chapter historically situates such bodies and the labour they undertake at the crossroads of the political ascendancy of the far right and the 'transgender tipping point'. Focusing on the context of the UK, it argues that the securing of national borders throughout the fabric of public and private spheres undermines LGBT rights. Responding to recent discussions considering transfeminism, trans people of colour and the politics of prison abolition, I argue that the cultivation of radical transfeminism as both a life praxis and political practice may

inaugurate a more liveable world, and call for the transformation of the material conditions that fracture transfeminine life.

I.5 Faultlines, bodies, poetics

The creative component of the thesis is a collection of poems *of sirens / body & faultlines*, a work that develops a radical queer lyric. This poetics is grounded in a queer Marxist and radical transfeminist understanding of the contemporary conditions of queer and trans bodies and lives, situating their flesh and desires historically.³³ Aesthetically, this projective lyric is rooted in the immediacy of queer New York School poets such as Frank O'Hara (1995) and Eileen Myles (1991, 1995) – writing committed to immediate observation, troubled affectivities, and a pre-Stonewall gay politic and ACT-UP-era, poor feminist and lesbian politic, respectively.³⁴ *of sirens* furthermore pursues new directions in linguistically innovative poetry, as developed in the works of UK poets

³³ While not strictly Marxist nor queer Marxist, Paul Preciado's (Foucauldian) historicisation of trans and queer feminist bodies in the twenty-first century and Preciado's reading of the "pharmacopornographic era" are also significant to this poetics (2013).

³⁴ O'Hara's work, in particular his poems posthumously published in the 1970s in *Gay Sunshine*, provides significant poetic articulations of queer and trans life in New York of the 1960s. Bruce Boone's 'Gay Language as Political Praxis' remains the primary text on the language politics of O'Hara's work and its importance for queer thought and literature. See also Christopher Hennessy (2013). Influenced by first generation New York School gay poets such as O'Hara and James Schuyler, Eileen Myles' work pursues an avant-garde poetics that is rooted in a "do it yourself" ethos that is "permanently insecure and self-taught" (2009: 160). Her working-class lesbian, feminist politics are arguably most visible in her 1992 Campaign as a write-in candidate for President of the United States, during some of the most challenging years of the AIDS Crisis in New York. The Campaign challenged the separation of art/performance and politics, while creating a space for lesbian sexuality/sex within the political sphere – to "always put my lover's cunt / on the crest / of a wave / like a flag / that I can / pledge my / allegiance / to" (Myles 1995: 48). For a reading of her campaign, see Nelson (2007).

Maggie O'Sullivan (1996), bob cobbing (1999), Allen Fisher (see Virtanen 2017: 105-153), Bill Griffiths (1974) and others writers of the British Poetry Revival (Sheppard 2005). In *of sirens*, I develop new means of expressing and encoding, feeling and suffering, and pushing back against the reifications of desire and work. This poetry responds to transformations in neoliberal capitalism, equality, political rhetoric, conditions of wage labour, and urban policing. It elaborates and interrogates expressions of queer and trans life, embodiment, sexuality and relationality. It is in dialogue with the work of contemporary poets Verity Spott (2014, 2017), Sean Bonney (*The Commons*, 2011, *Happiness*, 2011 and 2015), Vahni Capildeo (2015) and Sophie Robinson (2012), engaging with the Marxist/Communist political proposals and queer affective registers advanced by their work. My open field poetics deploys syntax, grammar, lineation, and the visual construction of the page in service of meaning making and of the poem as a score for performance. At times, collage is used to bring in non-linguistic visual elements, including photographed and found material from urban environments and newsprint, to visually and sonically present new poetic noise. This provides a representation of how perception is caught up in a cacophony of the present, and is used to express desire and pain, tensions and possibility.

To situate a queer lyric rooted in immediacy, of and for precarious queer and trans bodies in the present – and more specifically in post-2008 crisis London, a city glittering with financial capital, torn open by austerity as divestment and extraction from the poor, and by gentrification – necessitates an understanding of the forces of capital and the policing of poor and/or disabled people and/or people of colour in urban spaces. Gentrification is understood on the one hand as the repurposing of land, specifically the sites of social housing, for high-end

private residences for wealthier populations. On the other hand, Sarah Schulman formulates gentrification as the “literal experience” of “a concrete replacement process”, “the removal of communities of diverse classes, ethnicities, races, sexualities, languages, and points of view from the central neighborhoods of cities, and their replacement by more homogenized groups” (2012: 14). Describing the replacement of poor and/or queer people who died of AIDS in New York City, Schulman elaborates that gentrification entails “the destruction of culture” (14) and the “replacement” of the memory that “those earlier communities ever existed” (27). In *of sirens*, queer Marxism becomes a mode of poetic thought, the substance of dreaming and of a queer politics out in the street – encoding a memory of struggle, writing to make these politics legible while reiterating local queer, trans, and people of colour herstories/hirstories that seem obscured. The linguistic and visual components of the texts juxtapose elements of collage and found text with scenes of the present, hirstorical memories, abstract descriptions of bodies, domestic scenes and political contestations to elaborate the gravities and weights that disappear these precarious, queer, trans, feminist, of colour lives. As Eli Clare describes focusing on crip, trans, queer, of colour and white bodies and lives that have met death, these are lives that emerge for and from “stolen bodies, the bodies taken for good, [that] rise up around me”, and “Other bodies [that] live on — numb, abandoned, full of self-hate, trauma, grief, aftershock” (Clare 2001: 363). These bodies are “haunt[ed]” by the violence they and their communities have survived, bodies which can also be “reclaimed” in and as “liberation” (363).

of sirens enacts a queer and trans poetic as Mayakovskian social command (Mayakovsky 1970: 56) in service of the movements against austerity and neoliberalism, police brutality and the border regime, turning images of

homonormativity and homonationalism upside down, to dream of possibilities for queer and trans life. *of sirens* pursues a radical experimentation deploying all concrete elements of the poem in the service of a Rimbaudian derangement of the senses.³⁵ Sean Bonney emphasises that “for Rimbaud, the task of poetic labour is to suggest methods to bring about the derangement of the ‘entire history of the world’”:

The senses [for Rimbaud] are not the privatised senses of the official world, Bohemian or otherwise, but a collectivity that runs outward into a revolutionary sensory system that itself reaches backwards and forwards into time, upending capitalist temporality (2014).

³⁵ “A poet makes himself (sic) a visionary through a long, immense and logical derangement of all the senses [*immense et raisonné déreglement de tous les sens*]” (Arthur Rimbaud, ‘Letter to Paul Demeny, May 15, 1871’, translation altered by Sean Bonney, 2014). In her reading of Rimbaud through the 1871 Paris Commune, linking anarchist critiques of capitalist society, radical poetics and intoxication without diminishing the relation between these elements, Kristen Ross emphasises Rimbaud’s ‘dynamic opposition’ to the “ordered disorganisation” of both objects and perception within contemporaneous capitalist society (1988: 102). She argues that Rimbaud’s famous dictum of poetic praxis specifically “*target[s]*” the social production of a limited perception that is both the “*work and by-product of* capitalisms ‘ordered disorganisation’” (102, author’s emphasis). Against the violence that consumer capitalism enacts on individuals, “promoting the domination of the product” over both producers *and* consumers, Ross writes:

Rimbaud calls for a hypersensorial, more-than-human perception.

Grotesque, hyperbolic, extraordinary, superhuman perception is advocated in opposition to what capitalist development is at that moment defining (in the sense of setting the limits) *as* human, as *ordinary* perception (102).

‘Ordinary’, ‘human’ perception plays an important role in the assimilation of the individual, into the bourgeois society – especially in the moment of lull and crushing defeat for the empire, or the realisation of its negation in form of the anarchist insurrection of a city. Coupled to the excesses of intoxication, Ross argues that this gives rise to “erotico-poetics” where the potentiality (and realisation with the Paris Commune) of an incessant, swarming, humming crowd is effected onto the body, experienced and felt through only the hypersensorial, more-than-human perception (112-113). Thus, Rimbaud’s famous dictum of “*Je est un autre*” is “above all corporeal, a lived sensation on both a micro- and macro level”, as such perceptual expansion through the crowd of the insurrectionary moment physically transforms the experience of the body and its constitution, producing what Ross describes as an “awakening of colonies of the skin” at a cellular level (110).

In Bonney's reading of Rimbaud, the senses are understood as a collective means of knowing, and a means of revolt or revolution against the senses as structured or restructured by capital. Indeed, as Schulman suggests, such an avant-garde recoding of perception in the present may become an element of an "antigentrification process" (2012: 17). My poetics understands neoliberal capital's own derangement of the senses: to challenge liberal morals in order to free capital from "red tape"³⁶ for the purposes of enabling competition and accumulation, coupled to an increasing, reactionary restriction of the movement of labour by restricting the freedom of movement across national borders (see '[poem. in solidarity with the Southall Black Sisters demonstration against the UKBA, 24.10.13]' (264-265), "of the production of scorched &..." (301), "our presence in the city / ..." (344)). The poems attend to undercover police cars driving around South East London, in the knowledge that immigration enforcement may show up at any moment.

Writing of the widespread development and colonisation of forms of commodity exchange in the *Grundrisse*, Marx writes that "[i]t is now entirely possible that consonance may be reached only by passing through the most extreme dissonance" (1973: 148). In post-2008 crisis London, under lived states of anxieties and rising rents and where material precarity weighs on the lyric 'i', the poems elaborate a deeply dissonant language and forms of affect that find

³⁶ Former UK Prime Minister David Cameron regularly deployed conservative rhetoric challenging "red tape" for capital and businesses. In 2011, Cameron pledged to go to "war" on red tape, singling out the Equality Act (2010) as exemplary of barriers to businesses (see Hélène Mulholland, 2012, 'David Cameron axes equality legislation in war on 'red tape', *The Guardian*, 19th November 2012. Online at <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2012/nov/19/cameron-axe-equality-assessments>). The Equality Act remains the most significant legislation protecting LGBT, disabled, people of colour and women in the workplace and the public sector. This rhetoric has also been mobilised in arguments supporting Brexit.

relief in moments of collectivity – in the street and in politicized domesticity. In the spirit of the deregulation of the senses articulated in Bonney's reading of Rimbaud, the first person singular in *of sirens* is collectively predicated, desirous and seeking forms of political and historical belonging to pluralize it. It is through the articulation of collectivity that a queer hirstorical materialism in poetic form may be activated for the political present and future, to resurrect its own "dubious angels" and the upheavals they have witnessed and enacted. Capital, capitalism as a system, and its institutions have the power to eradicate these herstories/hirstories, these presents and futures; poetry may serve as a means to animate them.

As an art form, poetry is not repudiated for the production of economic value or for making profits.³⁷ Does the low economic valuation of this art form enable its alliances to other forms of devalued labour, such as that of social reproduction or of the political resistances of radical, socially and economically marginalised groups? While poetry in printed and bound form as a commodity inhabits relations of commodity exchange, its imaginative language and forms may proffer creative or direct proposals for the disruption of capitalist social relations and capitalist society. This may include advancing forms of radical consciousness, making one's reader conscious of capitalist social relations, or working towards the derangement of the entire history of the world. The poetries addressed and presented in these thesis attempt to use their conditions of marginalisation – produced by queer, feminised writers – to challenge capitalist social relations that entail the economic and cultural devaluation of

³⁷ In the UK, statistics from monitored poetry book sales for 2017 and 2018 are recorded as totaling £11 million to £12.3 million. 'Poetry sales soar as political millennials search for clarity', *The Guardian*, 21st January 2019. Online at <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jan/21/poetry-sales-soar-as-political-millennials-search-for-clarity>.

these writers and their surrounding milieus. The work of this queer Marxist poetics hence entails the affirmation of the cultural value of the socially and economically devalued and dispossessed, while documenting, imagining, amplifying and spreading their words, works and forms of resistance.

Chapter 1: 'Natural form queers': Reifications of desire and the value form of the commodity

Marx's theory of the commodity, articulated in the first chapter of *Capital*, Volume 1 (1990), has been of central importance to the development of queer Marxism. Key theoretical developments in the discipline, including Rosemary Hennessy's (2000) and Kevin Floyd's (2009) retooling of Georg Lukács' concept of reification (which as I discuss below is elaborated out of Marx's commodity fetishism), and conceptualisations of cultural schema of value such as Hennessy's 'second skins' (2013) are grounded in Marx's theory of the commodity and the labour theory of value. Marx's theories have provided models to root and historicise the forms of social transformation of queer life. This chapter opens with a reading of the reinvigoration of the conception of reification in the work of Hennessy and Floyd, which historicises the transformation of sexual subjectivity and epistemologies of desire in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries alongside the transformations of capitalist society, production and consumption. Beginning with a reading of Lukács (1971), the reification of labour processes and the reification of desire both entail significant changes in the material relationships between knowledge which one requires for labour or desiring, human activity and human bodies – with reification, labour becomes rationalised and predictable, and thus the demands of work confront the worker objectively, altering their qualitative experience of labour. This is followed by a detailed consideration of Marx's labour theory of value, in particular focusing on the dialectic of the value-form of the commodity.

While the labour theory of value has been influential within queer studies, Marx's theory has yet to be considered in detail; in fact the uptake of Marx's value theory in queer and cultural studies has been significantly influenced by Gayatri Spivak's essay 'Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value' (1988). Hennessy notes that the "renewed attention" to Spivak's essay has animated the critical rapprochements between Marxism and queer studies that have "attend[ed] to the value form and capital's investment in particular bodies" (2013: 127). The work of Hennessy (2013), Meg Wesling (2012, which I consider in the following chapter on queer and trans social reproduction), Miranda Joseph (2002) and Amy Villarejo (2003) has significantly cited this essay in developing queer readings of economic and cultural systems of value, to the extent where Spivak's deconstructive reading of Marx may have both positively influenced and hampered the development of queer Marxism's engagements with theories of value. In this chapter, I summarise Hennessy's powerful conceptualisation of a 'second skin' to interface cultural influences upon the economic value of feminised and abject bodies and their labour power. This is followed by a detailed reading of Marx's value form attending carefully to Spivak's reading, and furthermore paying particular attention to the development and transformation of the use-values of commodities. I undertake a reading of the dialectic of the value-form to understand the transformation of LGBTQ life under neoliberal capitalism from a perspective rooted in, but by no means reducible to, economic value. I argue that neoliberalism's drive for accumulation entails the abstraction and commodification of difference, which can be understood through the value form as rendering difference 'identical' as value.

1.1 Historicising the reification of desire

The concept of reification was originally posited by Georg Lukács, and rooted in Marx's theory of the fetish character of the commodity elaborated in the first chapter of *Capital*, Volume 1, whereby the social relations between commodity producers take on "the phantasmagoric¹ form of a relation between things" (Marx 1961: 72, cited in Lukács 1971: 86). Lukács emphasises that these "phantom" relations of a "non-human objectivity" "confront [man] as invisible forces that generate their own power", while obscuring the sources of that power (87); even though these seemingly natural laws are created through material relations by humans. Lukács emphasises the transformative effect of these relations on humans – on their activity and attitude towards the world. At the basis of modern capitalist society are relations of exchange, including the commodification and sale of labour power² by workers; furthermore, the technological developments of such a society, which for Lukács are contemporaneously exemplified by the development of the Fordist production line, transform and rationalise practices of labour, rendering the practical skills of workers less relevant for production. As methods of producing value and extracting surplus value are rationalised as such, Lukács argues, workers are deskilled as their labour becomes an element within "a specialised process ... already existing, complete and able to function without [the worker] and in which [the worker] is no more than a cipher reduced to an abstract quantity [i.e.

¹ Rose argues that the English translations of this sentence are incorrect and that "[t]he epithet 'phantasmagoric' stresses the personifications as well as the strangeness of the form in which the relations between men appear" (Rose: 1978: 31). It is in this sense that Lukács emphasises the "phantom objectivity" of the commodity form.

² In Marx's conception, labour power describes "mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form ... of a human being" (Marx 1990: 270). Under capitalism, labour power is sold in exchange of wages. Such capabilities, when deployed in the service of the valorisation of capital, can create surplus value.

value], a mechanised and rationalised tool" (166). To work under such conditions, whereby the demands and skills required within a job confront the worker as objectified knowledge, has a profound impact on one's psychology and one's activity. Lukács argues that the faculties of the worker used to undertake labour become "detached" from his "whole personality": reification entails that through the logic of the commodity form, these faculties are objectified, and "placed in opposition to [the worker], becoming a thing" (99) – a condition that for Lukács becomes "the permanent ineluctable reality of [the worker's] daily life" (89). Hence reification describes a process by which labour becomes "predictable", and human "activity" hence "becomes less and less active and more and more *contemplative*", while the transformation of modes of production, division of labour and labour itself, and their unprecedented extraction of surplus-value effect "the basic categories of man's immediate attitude to the world" (89, author's emphasis).

In significant contributions to queer Marxism, Rosemary Hennessy and Kevin Floyd utilise the concept of reification in order to historicise the interrelation between the developments of capitalist society and the development of discourses of sexuality. Hennessy and Floyd argue that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are marked on the one hand by shifts in the gendered division of labour – whereby broadly, in the West, working class women seek employment in metropolitan centres and the gendered characters of particular forms of work develop (as I discuss across chapters 2 and 3) – and the technological developments of Fordism/Taylorism. On the other hand, these centuries are marked by the development of the discourses of sexology and psychoanalysis and the emergence of sexual subjectivity as theorised by Foucault in *The History of Sexuality*, Volume 1 (1981). Both theorists synthesise

these arguments to Marx's theory of commodity fetishism and deploy Lukács' concept of reification. Hennessy's reading of commodity fetishism emphasises how it gives rise to a "phenomenological matrix", whereby "a form of consciousness or a cultural logic" that arises from the fetish character of the commodity "alienates many aspects of human life from the network of social relations that makes them possible" (2000: 95). That is, that commodity fetishism obscures the conditions of production and distribution of commodities, which gives rise to a cultural logic whereby these conditions seem irrelevant to everyday life – including to the fabrication and manifestation of sexual desires. By eclipsing the relations of production (and social reproduction) that make everyday life possible, Hennessy emphasises that commodity fetishism encodes "historically available ways of seeing" (95), including what images become images of desire.³ She continues by describing Lukács' emphasis on the pervasive logic of the commodity into "objective forms and forms of consciousness"; however, she writes that "while it has been argued rightfully that Lukács overemphasizes the pervasive invasion of consciousness by commodification, he does not finally see this process as all determining" (96).⁴ Thus Hennessy concludes "the organization of human

³ Hennessy writes hence that "perception ... is inseparable from the social relationships of labor and power commodity capitalism is premised on" (2000: 95).

⁴ In regards to the transformations of human relations by the expansion of the logic of the commodity and the development of reification, Hennessy emphasises that "Lukács refuses to ground his critique in any a priori unalienated organic human essence, dispelling the notion that there can be any "natural" form of unalienated existence or of human relations" (2000: 96). Lukács is here referring to the "natural form" of the commodity, and writes, "there is no natural form in which human relations can be cast" (Lukács 1971, cited in Hennessy 2000: 96).

relationships and the deployment of sexuality are intimately bound up with the history of commodification" (97).⁵

Describing the formation of the "new desiring subjects" of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century under the identities of heterosexual and homosexual, Hennessy stresses the importance of the paradigm shift in human sexuality – from its rooting in an 'active' or 'passive' sexual aim accorded to men or women respectively, to sexual identities defined according to sexual object choice (99). She argues that such new desiring subjects, which importantly included women, were "not defined so much in terms of species need for reproduction as in terms of individual consumer preferences or the objects he or she desires" (101, citing Birkin 1988). Such desiring subjects were of course not created equal: sexology's discourse of 'inversion' mapped heterosexist gender expressions onto "incoherently gendered" (100) and queer subjects, such as the 'mannish lesbian'.⁶ Hennessy thus writes that the "consolidation" of heteronormative identity

prescribes a double reification of the human capacity for sensation, affect and social intercourse through the organizational structures of gender and desire: it proposed an equation between sex and gender *and* organizes desire according to the gendered asymmetry [masculine and feminine] which we might call 'heteropolarity.' At the same time, heteronorms reify what [came] to be known as 'homosexuality'— defining, disciplining the human potential for sensation and social intercourse into an identity that complies with the heteronormative logics of gender and desire, only perversely so.

⁵ Hennessy's point develops upon inferences made by Lukács in his discussion of property relations, marriage and Kant (Hennessy 2000: 97).

⁶ Furthermore, as Floyd describes, sexology became a means whereby the bourgeoisie isolated themselves from the working classes which they labelled "unclean", and furthermore the discourse itself cannot be separated from eugenics – "[i]nverts were routinely associated with racial degeneration" given that they were "unhelpful in reproducing the vulnerable white race that eugenics discourse implicitly or explicitly posited" (2009: 44).

In other words, the heteronormative paradigm set the terms even for queer desire (102).⁷

Hence developments of discourses of sexuality substantially influenced both the social organisation of gender and desire under commodity capitalism and physiological and affective experience of desire itself, which, while becoming about sexual object choice, was different according to one's gender, racial and class position. Indeed, the "stability" of heterosexuality "was guaranteed through an array of reified perverse (sexual and racial) others but also through a modernized gender hierarchy" (100).⁸ The definition of heterosexual and homosexual identity historically occurs through a disciplining of human activity and affect, whereby such activities and affects are defined, understood and structured according to the logic of heteronormativity. We might add that activities and affects that fall outside this logic – unclassified perversions, but also the desires and sexualities of colonised/racialised people,⁹ disabled people, etc. – are rendered abject. Furthermore, this "reification of sexual identity" was inseparable from various transformations in capitalist society, including shifts in the division of labour whereby women were recruited "into the workforce in the colonies and metropolitan centres" (98). This was accompanied by changes in the ideology of the nuclear family; shifts (which were sometime contradictory) in the position of women and working-class men as subjects of (racialised) property laws and laws on consent;¹⁰ the technological

⁷ While Hennessy is here discussing the late nineteenth-century, her sentence in the original is written in the present tense, presumably to emphasize the ongoing influence of such reifications of sexual identity.

⁸ See also Sharon Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism* (2012)

⁹ For a detailed consideration of the importance of heteronormativity to the settler colonial project of North America and the role of anthropology (and later, Gay Liberation) as discourses Othering sexual and gender expressions of Native societies, see Morgensen (2011: 31-87)

¹⁰ While making this claim regarding the position of working-class women and men, racialised property laws, and laws on consent, Hennessy does not

developments, and boom, in production, fed by the “mechanisation and subsequent de-skilling” of labour; and the advent of mass markets and advertising, which “displaced unmet needs into new desires and offered the promise of compensatory pleasures” (98-99).

With a focus on the 1910s and 1920s in America, Floyd argues in *The Reification of Desire* that concurrent to the scientific rationalisations of the forces of production and cultures of consumption ushered in by Taylorism in America, the development of psychoanalysis – superseding sexology as *the* “discursive regime” (2009: 39) cognizing sexual desire – had a wide-spread disciplinary effect. Synthesizing Lukács’ insights with Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* (1981), Floyd asserts that the shift in discourses of sex from an emphasis on “actions” to “subjectivities” (for instance, from sodomy to homosexuals) “can be understood as mediated by capital in terms of a growing epistemological dissociation of sexual desire from the gendered body” (40). Floyd connects Lukács’s and Foucault’s arguments whereby “subjectivity is embedded in a history of the way particular knowledges shape, constrain, instrumentalize, attach meaning to, and otherwise manipulate concrete bodily practices” (43). Reframing reification “in terms of a relation between knowledge and bodies”, Floyd elaborates its dialectic to

refer to a subject-object dynamic specific to capitalist social relations by which social labor epistemologically objectifies bodily properties and capacities, and by which those objectifications in turn discipline, regulate, instrumentalize those bodies themselves, normalizing them as deskilled laborers or as sexual subjects (74).

For Floyd, reified knowledge confronts workers and sexual subjects, disciplining and transforming their bodily activity – what Lukács would have

substantiate it here. For a detailed reading on changes of racialised property laws in regards to homosexuality in the 20th century, see Eng (2010).

described as creating a “contemplative” character towards such activity.¹¹ Floyd identifies the spread of Freudianism throughout the 1910s conjunct to the historical moment where consumption starts to take centre stage in American culture and “begins to assume during this period an increasingly normalised, regulatory character” (49-50).¹² He argues that the development and spread of psychoanalytic discourse during this period entailed the isolation of sexual desire “from other bodily properties” (44), but moreover, compared to the eugenicist and gendered asymmetries of sexology, psychoanalysis’ universal address entails that sexual desire is “scientifically abstracted, dissociated, stripped from the *male* body as a condition of possibility for the saturation of *all* bodies” (60, emphasis added).¹³ While the possible subject of desire is increasingly opened up to women and those who have been racially Othered, the ‘reified’ science of psychoanalysis furthermore becomes “a means of revealing the truth, the essence of an individual subject” (44).

Floyd considers accounts from regulation theory that detail the deskilling of labour and the shifts in the division of labour, and the strategies adopted for capital accumulation during the period (46-52). This included the management

¹¹ Floyd details the problems with Lukács’ conflation of ‘objectivity’ and what Marx formulates as alienation in the *1844 Manuscripts* – whereby “Lukács conflates the *productive* capacity of collective labor to objectify itself with the exploitation and commodification of that category within capitalist social relations” (2009: 69, see 67-74).

¹² Freudianism describes a broad uptake of the ideas of Sigmund Freud, including his work on sexual development in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Floyd does not engage with Freudian thought in detail.

Chasin describes how changes in production and the increasing drive to consume, through the use and development of pictorial advertising, work to assimilate white Americans and immigrants to cultural norms (2000: 102-107).

¹³ Floyd’s claim regarding the psychoanalytic reification desire focuses on early twentieth-century psychoanalysis. He refrains from considering later developments in psychoanalytic thought by feminist or queer theorists and practitioners. Given the extent of these bodies of work and the direction of this dissertation, I refrain from engaging with this work here.

of consumption practices, the commodification of leisure activities, and furthermore establishing leisure time as an abstract form of time in a supplementary relation to labour time.¹⁴ “The managing of consumption within an emerging intensive regime of accumulation, the attempt to ensure that effective demand keeps pace with increases in productivity,” writes Floyd, “is... a compensatory intervention mediating—normalizing, regulating, commodifying—personal life” – affectively deskilling personal life, like labour (53). Access to sexual knowledge via “the increasingly normalised consumption of psychoanalysis” hence becomes mediated by commodity exchange, as the management of accumulation manipulates and “deskills” bodies to this end (55). Understanding the mistakes of Lukács’ Hegelianism, which focuses negatively on the historical transformation of the subject under the abstractions and reifications of capital, Floyd emphasises that “the reifying of sexual desire needs to be understood as a condition of possibility for a complex, variable history of sexually nonnormative discourses, practices, sites, subjectivities, imaginaries, collective formations, and collective aspirations” (74-75) – indeed the reification of desire as formulated by Floyd has been a necessary condition for the spread of knowledge regarding sexual subjectivity and the development and establishing of alternative sexual practices.

Reification and the commodity form provide theoretical models for grounding changes in sexuality and capitalist development. Hennessy and Floyd’s use of reification thus foregrounds that the historical knowledge of, and conditions of

¹⁴ Reading Moishe Postone, Floyd describes the difference between ‘concrete time’, which “depends on events” and is “a result of, and measured *by*, activity”; and ‘abstract time’ which is “uniform, homogenous, independent of events and indeed determining of ... events”, and thus “conditions and is a measure *for* activity” (2009: 52, citing Postone 1996, author’s emphasis). Thus socially necessary labour time and leisure time are two forms of abstract time. Floyd here argues that the reification of desire operates through abstract temporalities.

possibility for, desire are inextricable from developments of capitalist production and consumption. Furthermore, psychoanalysis's key role in universalising the subject of desire describes a key development for the possibility of heterosexuality and homosexuality in the early twentieth-century. We might consider the ongoing influence of psychoanalysis in feminist and queer theory as exemplary of the developments possible through the reification of an episteme.¹⁵

1.2 Cultural values, second skins

In her work addressing the experiences and labour organising of homosexual maquiladora workers on the northern border of Mexico, Rosemary Hennessy importantly reworks the concept of a 'second skin' from trans theorist Jay Prosser. For Hennessy, second skins cognize "the cultural value adhering to social identities... that gets folded into the labor power that workers exchange for a wage and is reproduced at home" (2013: 125). Second skins function as an interface between shifting cultural values and the devaluation of the bodies that carry them, between the spheres of social production and social reproduction, devaluations that materialise in the form of low wages. Such cultural values are

open to history, which means they are sites of struggle. The values inscribed in [second skins] are contested and therefore can change and be adjusted, even though they may be represented in the common sense as natural and universal (126).

However, a second skin is not merely a measure of cultural value – Hennessy details the metaphor of skin as a bodily organ that "mediates the interface

¹⁵ The work of Theresa de Lauretis and Leo Bersani might exemplify the deployments of psychoanalysis in queer theory in the 1980s and 1990s; for a more recent consideration, see Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman's *Sex, Or the Unbearable* (2014).

between the corporeal and the psychic" (126). Skin "registers how we see and know the world affectively", alongside what also "hovers on the edge of intelligibility" (126). For Hennessy, cultural values influence the constitution of identities and their affectivity. Cultural values "circulate in signs that plot normative body maps along a differential grid of negative and positive categories that often conform to ideological norms" (126). That is, cultural values have a normative influence upon identities, influencing the affectivity of their being and "impact[ing] what the body senses" (127), both beyond and within the workplace.¹⁶ We might add that this tissue interfaces the transformations of the "affect-laden cultures" (125) of queer and trans life by neoliberal capitalism – the inclusion of certain privileged LGBTQ subjects into the institutions of capitalist society while others are disenfranchised, exploited and marked for death, as I discuss below – influencing our sense of being that is felt through the body.

Hennessy continues by discussing the role of abjection and feminisation on cultural values and second skins. Citing Kristeva's use of abjection to describe what has been "expelled from the (social) body, discharged as excrement, literally rendered Other", she argues that abjection functions as "the scaffolding of a cultural value system that marks certain embodied subjects as shameful, disposable, ideal, or proper" (128-129). Hennessy thus claims that abjection "inheres... in the normative devaluation of reproductive labor"; and furthermore in the labour market cultural devaluation entails that "second skins ... command a low price", which is an aspect of exploitation (129).

¹⁶ Hennessy is careful to note that capital's waged day entails the wearing down of the worker's personality, which is – in some cases necessarily – rejuvenated by socially reproductive labour (2013: 129). She elaborates on this in her reading of Marx's conception of labour power in Chapter 6 of *Capital*, Volume 1 (140-142).

However, given the affectivity surrounding abjection, it should be clear that this is not limited to the workplace, as Hennessy writes:

Capitalism would not work—that is, capital would not be accumulated—if the disciplining of the body to enter the market and the devaluing of the second skin of labor power there and at home were not under way (129).

Hennessy argues that abjection underwrites the feminisation of labour power – whereby within cultural value systems the feminine marks the worker as seemingly “untrainable” (131) – and places emphasis on how “all subjects who transgress the prescribed distribution of gendered bodies are feminized, where they are men or women” (130). She historicises the changes in feminisation of labour within the maquilas from the creation of the Border Industrialization Program in 1965, to the saturation of supply of women workers in the mid-1980s, to the relaxation of gender codes in the workforce with the increase in the number of gay men working alongside women in the 1990s (135-136). Recognising “the changing value of sexual identity in relation to capital’s need for cheap labor” – and highlighting this through the narratives of her interview subjects and in particular homosexual and gender non-conforming labour organiser Carmen – Hennessy writes that while heteronormativity initially excluded transgressive queer subjects, “homosexuals were absorbed into the general calculus of appropriately devalued labour when capital was desperate to take whomever it could get” (137). Such transformations can indeed create the space for sexual subcultures to burgeon within particular sectors of the labour force, as I discuss in my account of Allan Bérubé’s conception of ‘queer work’ (2011) in chapter 3. In regard of one’s second skin,

To be feminized is to bear on your embodied second skin the mark of (de)valuation, which is indeed quite valuable to capital. It legitimates your potential disposability, the low limit on the wages you can

command, and the excessive value-added charge your labor will produce (131).

Hennessy asserts, “gender transgression itself bears the marks of abjected devaluation” (130); I explore such devaluations in detail later in this dissertation in my chapter on transfeminine brokenness (Chapter 5). Hennessy’s reading of Carmen’s narrative and praxis demonstrates how one’s disidentification with, and at times outright refusal of, the abjection tied to being gay can urge one into collective resistance (135); however, she is careful to note that a second skin can restrict our awareness of one’s “historical position and ... our ability to enact its material transformation” (140).

Hennessy’s recoding of second skins provides an important critical tool for queer Marxism, linking cultural influence on the value of labour power and the affectivity embedded in conceptions of labour and cultural value, whereby abjection and gender transgression within the division of labour reduces wages and positions one more likely to experience negativity or abuse while working.¹⁷ In addition, we must ensure that this tool remains attentive to considerations of race and migration, both of which play a critical, influential role on cultural values and the value and feminisation of labour power within the international division of labour, as Hennessy’s elaboration carefully spells out in the context of the Mexican borderlands.

We have seen how reification of desire and second skins are key conceptual tools for queer Marxism, rooted in Marx’s theory of the commodity. As

¹⁷ Carmen’s account details instances of abuse at her workplace, Fabricas de Calidad, including particular instances where she is labelled as homosexual, and more general instances faced by the feminized workforce as a whole such as having to take ‘vitamins’ (Hennessy 2013: 132-135). The relationship between the devaluation of one’s second skin, the affectivity of labour, and the concept of reification, could be usefully explored here – I refrain from doing so at this stage.

Hennessy and Floyd's work argues, the developments of capitalist society liberate new conditions of possibility for sexual subjectivity and desire; and the transformations of sexuality are mobilised and instrumentalised for the purposes of the accumulation of capital. Furthermore, second skins describe an interface between cultural and economic regimes of value, and the concept provides a means to consider the material implications of cultural abjection in regards to gender and sexuality within capitalism's gendered division of labour.

1.3 The concept of value in Marx

In the next section, I return to Marx's *Capital* to further consider the commodity and the value form of the commodity in particular. To apply these concepts constructively for queer Marxism at this stage requires a detailed explication of Marx's labour theory of value and the multiplicity of its concept of value (as value, use-value, exchange-value and surplus-value) as the foundation for this work, something that is absent from queer deployments of Marx.

The labour theory of value is a key foundation to Marx's critique of classical political economy developed across *Capital*. Arguing that political economy has never explored the meaning of the three constituent parts of its concept of value – use-value, exchange-value, and value – Marx details and interrogates these three parts. Use-value describes the useful qualities of objects or services for human beings. Any object, natural or man-made, may have use-value, which is “only realised in consumption” (Marx 1990: 126); furthermore, recognising the multiplicity of possible uses for “[e]very useful thing”, Marx emphasises on the

first page of *Capital* volume 1 that “[t]he discovery of these ways and hence of the manifold uses of things is the work of history” (125). On the other hand, exchange-value arises when an individual or society has an excess of products that may be exchanged with other parties, to gain other useful things. Exchange-value is a “social” property – as Heinrich describes, “only in societies where things are exchanged do they possess an exchange-value, only then are they commodities” (2012: 40). Hence, with transformation of things into commodities, exchange-value first “appears first of all as the quantitative relation, the proportion, in which use-values of one kind exchange for use-values of another kind,” – hence a certain quantity of object x is worth a certain quantity of object y (126). Every commodity thus has a dual character – it has a use-value and an exchange-value.

In a strict, economic sense, value is produced by human labour; human labour is the *substance* of value. The substance of a value is given by the quantity of socially necessary labour-time (detailed below) required to produce an object under the average social conditions of a particular society. Hence, value describes the cost, in labour, of the production of a commodity; exchange-value describes the price it is sold at. Value describes a social relationship of a commodity – “value isn’t a thing like [a] bread roll”, writes Heinrich, “but rather a social relationship that *appears as a tangible characteristic* of a thing” (2012: 52). Value is a theoretical, and real, abstraction that arises when different products of labour are equated with each other through exchange.

The conception of value has been evolved and expanded since Marx, undertaking distinct forms within cultural and literary studies. However, as John Guillory argues, the conceptions of value within the latter discourses have

operated independently of political economy's concept of value. Such discourses of value have been grounded in communities that have internal norms, morals and ethical standards, often posited as discrete from each other or from systems of domination such as capitalism (Guillory 1993: 276-279).

The need to conceptualise the transformations of queerness (its cultural objects, subcultures, signifiers, relations, spaces, performances, subjectivities and desires) according to the capitalist reproduction of value at this particular historical moment remains an important task for understanding how LGBTQ lives are being transformed with their differential enfranchisement and disenfranchisement. How does the capitalist drive for profit influence the legitimisation of particular aspects of queerness, particular social and material relations? How are particular forms of queer labour – a concept that we must develop – transformed with the reproduction of value for capital? How does this relate to the production and circulation of particular forms of commodified queerness (cultural objects, signifiers, performances etc.)? How are particularities of queerness transformed as they acquire cultural capital? And, importantly, how are queer lives and queer worlds seemingly 'liberated' through capitalism, while the horizons of such worlds are also limited? How might Marx's labour theory of value speak toward the transformations of queerness as capital flows through its cultures?

I have briefly described above the concepts of use-value, exchange-value and value – that use-value describes a thing as useful; that value consists of human labour, which is equated with human labour in other objects, and hence that exchange value describes the abstract, quantitative equality between qualitatively different things. When an object or service (which is otherwise not

useful for its owner) enters the marketplace, these objects acquire a “social form” as commodities, as they acquire an exchange-value (Heinrich 2012: 40, quoting Marx 1990: 128). Commodities hence have a dual character – they have a use-value and an exchange-value. This exchange value is expressed in a certain quantity of another thing – an equivalent to the first commodity. These exchange-values are “mutually replaceable or of identical magnitude”. Furthermore, “this relation changes constantly with time and place” (Marx 1990: 126-127), i.e. its character is historically and socially specific.

The “common factor in the exchange relation” is value – the fact that two things are the product of human labour makes them commensurable as values. Exchange-value is “the necessary mode of expression, the form of appearance, of value” (128); furthermore, value “can only appear in the social relation between commodity and commodity” (139). Value is thus *realised*, as a quantity of human labour commensurable with an equal quantity of human labour, with the social realisation of exchange. Through the exchange relation between two things (x amount of wheat for y amount of bread, y amount of bread for £1.50, £7.83 for one hour of labour), an abstract quantity of value is realised. In this abstraction through exchange, the “sensuous characteristics” of objects and the “different concrete forms of human labour” are “extinguished”; as values, these products “are merely congealed quantities of homogeneous human labour”,¹⁸ left with a “spectral objectivity”¹⁹ (128).

¹⁸ For detailed engagement with the limitations of the translation of this sentence, and of “gallerte” to “congealed” in particular, see Sutherland (2008: 6-11). Sutherland argues that this translation creates a serious problem for the [Anglophone] conception of labour-power in Marx.

¹⁹ Translation of “*gespenstige Gegenständlichkeit*” altered by Heinrich (2012: 49).

Given that “the labour that forms the substance of value is equal human labour, the expenditure of identical human labour” in the abstract,²⁰ the magnitude of a commodity’s value is determined by the “socially necessary labour-time” to produce it. Socially necessary labour-time is “the labour time required to produce any use-value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labour prevalent in that society” (129). Thus, if methods of producing a commodity improve such that the number of commodities produced in a given time is doubled, the value of the labour added to these products is halved (129); and, as we have witnessed in the above discussion of reification, the worker producing these commodities must adapt to the new mode of production, to the change in skills and intensity required of their labour-power. However, as we know, value is the product of human labour. If it requires 5 hours of socially necessary labour-time to weave 5 yards of linen into a coat, Marx argues, the worker *adds* five hours of labour to the 5 yards of linen, reproducing (or valorising) the value of the linen through her labour and adding the value of her labour-power to this material to produce the coat. The quantity of labour time hence appears in the finished product in the form of value.

Marx shows in the first chapter of *Capital*, Volume 1 that money, a commodity itself, develops historically as a mediator of exchange relations between objects or services, functioning as a “universal equivalent” of these things, naming their equivalence and hence exchange value in a particular quantity of currency (10 yards of linen = £1, 1 coat = £1, 100g tea = £1, therefore £1 can be exchanged for any of these things, equivalent to each other in terms of their price).

²⁰ I discuss the identical character of human labour within the value form in greater detail in chapter 3.

Significant to the production of commodities is the question of ownership, i.e. the relations of production. Under capitalism, workers produce commodities for capitalists – the latter own the products and their constitutive materials, and buy the labour power of workers. Corresponding to this is the extraction of surplus-value by capitalists from workers. Proletarian workers are “free” to sell their labour power to capitalists; capitalists buy the labour-power of workers, as this as living labour has a use-value to produce and valorise value.²¹ In return, workers receive a wage that, *theoretically*, should provide them with enough money to buy food, clothing, and other items of subsistence, i.e. should allow them to return to work. However, the value equivalent of wages does not equal the value produced by the worker’s labour power: the value produced by labour power is greater than its equivalent in wages, and hence includes surplus-value. This, for Marx, is represented in quantified labour-time – a worker labours for a certain number of hours, which produces a mass of value equivalent to her wages, and thus is ‘working for herself’ for this time, designated as ‘necessary labour’ for her survival; beyond this, the worker’s²² labour power is employed in the creation of value beyond the equivalent paid to her in wages, and thus producing surplus-value for the capitalist. Marx thus posits the definition of exploitation (i.e. the rate of surplus value produced) –

²¹ Valorisation describes the process whereby living labour is incorporated into the materials of production (materials of a “lifeless objectivity”), producing commodities containing surplus-value which are then to be sold (these commodities are commodity capital). Given that labour is itself a means of production, and that the means of production thus produce more value than that contained in the capital expended on them, value “perform[s] its own valorization process”. Marx, citing Goethe’s Faust, describes this value here as “an animated monster, which beings to ‘work’, ‘as if its body were by love possessed’” (1990: 302).

²² The inadequacy of grammar to represent capitalist exploitation rears its head with the apostrophe ‘s’ of “worker’s”. While the labour power is that of the worker, in this clause it wholly belongs to the capitalist. In the previous clause of this sentence, it appeared to belong to the worker (‘working for herself’), yet the labour power at this moment also had been purchased for capitalist consumption.

the degree of which is measured by the amount of surplus labour performed by the worker over the amount of 'necessary labour' they perform (1990: 326).

1.4 Spivak's value theory and the natural form of the commodity

Having provided a detailed explication of Marx's value theory, and keeping in mind the scope of Hennessy's formulation of second skins to map the influence of cultural value on economic value in the workforce, let us turn to Spivak's critique of Marx in 'Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value' (1988: 154-175). In this essay Spivak intends to "recontextualize value" to address cultural concerns, such that the concept of value may be developed to "mediate between the material, the cultural and the psychic". Given that "the psychic realm of desire and the material realm of accumulation and exchange" are "often understood to operate autonomously" (Wesling 2012: 107)²³, this is of particular importance for understanding the interrelated character of these spheres. Queer Marxists have typically argued that the developments of capitalist production and consumption, divisions of labour and capitalist society more broadly are inextricable from the development of epistemologies of desire and sexual subjectivity; hence possibilities of queerness and desire (and their circulation within cultures and subcultures) are developed, enabled and foreclosed through changes in capitalist society.²⁴ Furthermore, as we shall see from the perspective of the commodity form, the progress of capitalist society pursues

²³ For an analysis and critique of postmodernist theories of desire as autonomous, see Morton (1996: 1-33).

²⁴ John D'Emilio influentially argues that the development of industrial capitalism in the US, and its specific formations in the twentieth-century (such as the distribution of labour during war-time economies that bought more women into metropolitan areas), provided the material conditions for gay and lesbian cultures (1982).

the creation of new desires to satisfy. Spivak emphasises the importance of “taking into account the fact that, firstly, the complicity between the cultural and economic value-systems is acted out in almost every decision we make; and, secondly, that economic reductionism is, indeed, a very real danger” (1988: 166). Invoking Walter Benjamin, she states “[a] ‘culturalism’ that disavows the economic in its global operations cannot get a grip on the concomitant production of barbarism” (1988: 168). As we have seen, from our contemporary vantage point of neoliberalism it is clear that neoliberal economics has far from disavowed culturalism – as nation states mobilise the conferral of rights (for women, LGBTQ people, people of colour, and so on) to claim they have achieved equality for minoritised groups, some arguing, as the World Bank has, that these are an *economic necessity* (see Rao 2015). Meanwhile, the same neoliberal states engage with the production of a type of barbarism through austerity programmes and Free Trade Zones, international debt and microfinance agreements (Federici 2014), based upon gendered divisions of labour across continents, and the pursuit of warfare and arms trade in other parts of the world for economic gain – barbarism aimed at labouring subjects within and well beyond national borders (Puar 2007).

Spivak’s critique advances two significant arguments that have been influential to queer theorists – her discussion of the open character of the start of the value chain and her expansion of the concept of productive labour as ‘affectively necessary labour’, the latter of which I detail in Chapter 2. I concentrate in this section on the open character of the start of the value chain in order to consider the importance of use-value in Marx’s schema and the natural form of the commodity. In her explicitly “textual” reading of Marx’s chain of value, Spivak claims that a “possibility of indeterminacy” exists at each of the three moments

in the chain that moves from Value → Money → Capital (1988: 160, 162). The chain is described as “textual” given that its two ends are “open” in that they pertain to “relationships [that] harbor discontinuities” – i.e. many potential commodities or services may enter into the social relationships of ‘value’ or ‘capital’ (I return to this below). However, Spivak argues that in Marxian political economy the start of the chain is sealed off by the move Labour → Value. Spivak claims that Marx leaves the possibility of a “subtle open-endedness at the origin of the economic chain or text” (158). The movement through the chain is one of increasing abstraction; each point in the chain is discontinuous, requiring a moment of transformation or representation. Spivak specifically emphasises two aspects from what she describes as Marx’s “definitive passage on Value” at the start of *Capital* Volume 1, in order to highlight the radical potential of use-value. First, given Marx’s statement that “In the exchange-relation of commodities their exchange-value *appeared to us* as totally independent of their use-value” (my emphasis), Spivak claims that in order to define value Marx must *subtract*²⁵ use-value from the commodity form.²⁶ In Spivak’s reading, use-value must be taken out of the equation of a relation of exchange between two commodities. Furthermore, Marx suggests “[t]he common element that represents itself (*sich darstellt*) in the exchange-relation of the exchange-value of the commodity, is thus value” (Marx 1990: 128, retranslated in Spivak 1988: 158). From this second point, Spivak claims that Marx’s description of value is of “a differential representing itself or being represented by an agency (‘we’) no more fixable than the empty and ad hoc

²⁵ It is noted that Marx’s text states that use-value must be *abstracted* from the commodity form (1990: 128).

²⁶ Joseph notes that Spivak’s argument is rooted in Diane Elson’s reading of Marx’s value theory – which argues that “under the capitalist mode of production, labor is determined by value (rather than value by labor)” (2002: 183, ftnt. 15; citing Elson 1979).

place of the investigator or community of investigators" (158). That is, value represents itself, yet cannot be clearly determined. Value can only be defined by banishing use-value, and, according to Spivak, is unable to fixedly represent itself.²⁷

By focusing on her critique on the aforementioned passage from the first section of *Capital* Volume 1, Chapter 1, Spivak crucially misses Marx's consideration of the "double form" that commodities must inhabit. As "objects of utility and bearers of value", commodities have a "natural form" and a "value form" respectively (1990: 138). The dialectic between these forms has significant implications for the relation between value and use-value. When a commodity is placed in a value-relation with another (x commodity A = y commodity B), the value of (to use Marx's famous example) 20 yards of linen is expressed through its equivalence with 1 coat; thus

the form of the coat counts as the form of value. The *value* of the commodity linen is therefore *expressed by the physical body of the commodity coat*, the *value* of one by the *use-value* of the other. As a use-value, the linen is something palpably different from the coat; as value, it is identical with the coat, and therefore looks like the coat. Thus the linen acquires a value-form different from its natural form (143, emphasis added).

We have seen above how the equation of two commodities *as values* in the exchange-relation extinguishes the sensuous characteristics of objects. This abstraction of value is not possible however without the expression of the value of one commodity *through* the use-value of another. In this relation between

²⁷ As we see in *Capital* Volume 3, values are in fact submerged in under the categories of price (cost price, commercial price and price of production), and thus a subjective position – from the surface position of the capitalist consciousness that Marx emphasises in this volume – would only have access the money name of a commodity's value (i.e. its price), and not a commodity's actual value (Marx 1991, Chapter 9 in particular).

things, the “materialization of labour” in commodity A (the linen) can only be expressed through the “material” use-value of commodity B (the coat) (144).

While commodities as exchange-values “do not contain an atom of value”, and when they are equated as values in the exchange abstraction their “sensuous characteristics are extinguished” (128), commodities undergo a “metamorphosis” through exchange, changing from a value to a use-value in their social movement between owners. By emphasising the *subtraction* of use-value from value over the *abstraction* of value through exchange, and focusing on value’s apparent representation of itself, in Spivak’s reading the representation of value seems to jettison the abstraction of value in the exchange relation. Spivak misses that value’s representation of itself involves its embodiment in another object, which requires that other object to be of social use.²⁸ However, as Joseph argues, “value can do nothing without embodiment” (2002: 20). *The value form of a commodity must be expressed through the natural form of its equivalent.* The social character of value can only be expressed through its relation to other commodities. The resulting movement in exchange leads to the metamorphosis of the commodity.

Let us return to the open-ended character of the value chain’s start. The potential for things (labour, objects, services) to attain value (that is, have their value realised through the exchange abstraction) is open-ended; however, the necessary open-endedness of *what* may possibly attain value is hardly subtle in Marx’s project. This open-endedness of potential values is exactly what draws new objects and services, new use-values and forms of labour (and drives labouring subjects to pursue and perform these for potentially rewarding

²⁸ “Despite its buttoned-up appearance, the linen recognizes in [the coat] a splendid kindred soul, the soul of value” (Marx 1990: 143).

wages) into the social relation of the value chain. These inputs are transformed with their new role in capitalist production.²⁹ While Spivak does not consider the significance of use-value's subsumption under capital, she importantly highlights that use-value "is both outside and inside the system of value-determinations":

It is outside because it cannot be measured by the labour theory of value – it is outside the circuit of exchange: "A thing can be a use-value without being a value" [Marx 1990: 131]. It is, however, not *altogether* outside the circuit of exchange. Exchange-value [...] is also a superfluity or a parasite of use-value: "This character (of exchange) does not yet dominate production as a whole, but concerns only its superfluity and is hence itself more or less *superfluous* ... an accidental enlargement of the sphere of satisfactions, enjoyments.... It therefore takes place only at a few points" [Marx 1973: 204] (Spivak 1988: 162, original emphasis).

Spivak emphasises that use-value has a "normative place inside" the theory of value, and yet is also "banished" in order for value to be "defined" (162). Furthermore, the parasite of exchange-value is "the species term" of value.

While Spivak's emphasis on use-value's internal and external relation to the sphere of value is important, there are significant issues that remain unaddressed in the above-cited passage. While Spivak's essay has an important awareness of her "present" historical moment (162),³⁰ her citation of Marx's *Grundrisse* (1973) erases the distinctions between her historical present and that of the systems of barter which Marx is specifically discussing in this text. These

²⁹ In 'Results of the Immediate Process of Production', published as an appendix to *Capital* Volume 1 (1990: 941-1084), Marx emphasises that as the character of exchange begins to dominate production as a whole the commodity form becomes "the *general form of the product*" of "a new and specific historical character" (950). Thus through a transformation of the commodity's social form, the historical character of the content is also transformed. I will return to the implications of this for queer life below.

³⁰ Spivak addresses, for instance, a number of contemporary technological concerns, emphasising the importance of expanding the narrative of Marxist history to "accommodate the epistemic violence of imperialism as crisis-management", in order to "read the text of political economy at large" (1988: 171).

are systems of “direct, unmediated exchange” that Marx addresses in theorising the development of gold into the money form as it attains the character of the universal equivalent (1973: 204). Under conditions of barter, Marx states that the commodity produced is “exchange value only *in itself*” – i.e. the product “is not yet posited as exchange value” (ibid). This is because exchange itself has not developed and permeated the totality of society: exchange is limited and commodities are not produced solely for the purpose of exchange (204-5). Under such conditions, the abstract value relations between things do not yet dominate society and the objects that it produces, and use-values are not yet produced for the purposes of accumulating capital.³¹

1.5 The historical subsumption of use-values

It is imperative to recognise the historical and social specificity of use-values and the particular social relations that arise through their production, which as Miranda Joseph argues “supplement the discontinuous circuit of abstract value, enabling its circulation” (2002: 15). As capitalism develops, use-values are increasingly subsumed to the needs of capitalist reproduction, in terms of both the objects produced under capitalism and types of labour demanded by capital. The historical progress of this real subsumption is of significant importance to the transformations of cultures by capitalism. Within societies that pursue the accumulation of capital, accumulation – “[t]he employment of surplus-value as capital, or its reversion into capital” (Marx 1990: 725) –

³¹ In his historical analysis of the development of merchant’s capital in *Capital*, Volume 3, Marx considers the increasing permeation of exchange-value through capitalist society and its mediation by commercial capital. This leads to “the full development of capitalist production, where the product is produced simply as a commodity and not at all as a direct means of subsistence” (1991: 442-443).

requires “the transformation of a portion of the surplus product”, the “material components” that contain surplus-value, into capital (726-727). Labour-power, with its use-value of valorising capital, is an essential component of this transformation, becoming variable capital in its exchange for wages, or through its employment in the social reproduction of the worker. As we have seen in our discussion of reification, workers are increasingly subject to specialised forms of labour (of greater intensity, demanding higher productivity and particular skills) that develop with the capitalist division of labour (one worker becoming “an organ of the collective labourer”), with technological developments and the expansion of the capitalist marketplace. Marx writes that the social character of productive labour is increasingly narrowed to that which contributes “towards the self-valorisation of capital” (644). Furthermore, this impacts on the reproduction of the socially productive labourer – the reproduction of living labour power, as Federici argues, “must be simultaneously a production and valorisation of desired human qualities and capacities, and an accommodation to the externally imposed standards of the labor market” (2012: 99). The labour of capitalist society must be productive towards its own ends (infinite accumulation); the workers of this society, whose labour power is the means toward this end, must be fit for purpose. While the open-ended character of the value chain remains, only specific forms of concrete labour (and specific commodities) will be socially useful for capitalist society.

In his essay addressing “key contradictions between value and use-value with a view to seeing how capital actively overcomes use-value”, Chris Arthur emphasises the importance of investigating “the otherness of use-value” which capital must “grapple ... in order to ground valorisation on production” (2003:

133, 135). Arthur particularly considers “use-value as an economic form” (135). He argues that when labour power confronts capital and is exchanged for money (variable capital), labour power in its concrete particularity becomes the use-value of capital itself. Wages and labour power are equivalent in their value form, however labour power in its natural form will produce value and surplus-value in the service of capital, and is one of the means by which capital valorises itself (136). The realisation of capital necessarily requires, through production, the “*material transformation* of one use-value into another” – the use-value of labour-power and the means of production are consumed in production to create a commodity with a different material use-value from its constituent parts.³² Hence, capital “becomes conscious of use-value considerations, in consumption and (more importantly) in production, only in so far as they accelerate or impede valorisation” (132). We see that use-value is increasingly dragged into the chain of value to enable the flow of capital as new forms of labour are commodified; and the use-value of labour power must continue to be exploited, leading to the employment of managers and foremen to ensure workers continue to produce value (and don’t slack off).

It is imperative to emphasise, as Miranda Joseph does in her reading of Marx’s value theory, that “utility is socially and historically determined” (2002: 14). That the use of things develops with history requires us to understand the historical specificity of a use-value at any given moment. What makes an object, form of labour or service useful for a given society is unquestionably historical – the “discovery” of such uses is what Marx describes as “the work of history” (1990: 125). This is also the case for the use-values that capital draws into the

³² Arthur describes this schematically as follows: “M–C ... P ... C’–M”, where “M = money; C = commodity; P = production; M’ = M + Δm ” (2003: 137).

economic sphere – we must understand how this transforms the character of the discovery of use-values when use-values are produced to realise profit and enable the reproduction of capital. Indeed, the use-values of objects produced capitalistically (for the purposes of accumulation) are economic by nature. The embodiment of values in use-values is necessary for capital to reproduce itself, as value travels between the spheres of production, distribution and consumption (Joseph 2002: 13). While we cannot underestimate the importance of Marx's statement that "capitalist production as such is indifferent to the particular use-values it produces, and in fact to the specific character of its commodities in general", the sale of commodities plays a critical role in the accumulation of capital (1991: 297). As Joseph writes, "[s]hould the joining/metamorphosis of value and use value fail, capital accumulation will fail" – for example, without useful goods on sale, or with useless goods failing to sell, accumulation will not be realised (2002: 20). In this "form" that binds capitalists to selling commodities at "prices which deliver the average profit," "capital becomes conscious of itself as a *social power*" (Marx 1991: 297).

Capitalist production is characterised by its progression, "with the corresponding development of the productivity of social labour and multiplication of branches of production and hence products" (325). With this comes a "progressively rising mass of use-values and satisfactions" (325). Corresponding to the developments of Fordism, the twentieth-century saw the production and reproduction of the cultural sphere as culture industry, as theorised by Adorno and Horkheimer (1997: 120-167). The mass production of commodities for satisfaction and enjoyment – the commodification of the use-value of pleasure – exemplifies how use-values and thus the potential uses of commodities for consumers have been increasingly influenced by industrialised

cultural production. Such developments are necessary for the expansion of capital through the accumulation of value; capital (personified in capitalists) is conscious of its social power for such expansion. However, the culturally particular address of neoliberalism functions as a contradiction to capitalism's indifference toward use-value production. As Miranda Joseph argues in *Against the Romance of Community*, the increasingly global character of capital (that retains an "imagined placelessness") is reproduced across numerous localities and imagined communities, through an invocation of the "particularity of identity, social relationships, and values against the abstraction of capital" (2002: 147). Alongside capitalism's indifference to the use-values it produces, this contradiction *appears* as a form of diversity that remains grounded in the universality of the exchange. In the next section, I consider the development of gay and lesbian commodity cultures in the 1990s and their critique within queer theory.

1.6 Marketing gay and lesbian commodity cultures

A significant condition of possibility for the rise of queer liberalism and homonationalism³³ has been their basis within developed and visible gay and lesbian consumer cultures. As elaborated by queer studies in the late 1990s and early 2000s, such consumer cultures have grown through the increased marketing of commodities to LGBTQ people – including marketing particular products for lesbian and gay consumers and through targeted advertising. This has given rise to phenomena such as the multi-billion dollar gay and lesbian

³³ For an account of the deployment of American patriotism and nationalism as an "active construction" in gay marketing, see Chasin (2000: 108-143, quoting 125).

tourism industry³⁴ and highly lucrative gay pride events across the globe (although predominately located in the West) sponsored by banks and multinational corporations.³⁵ Addressing the role of advertising as a tool for national assimilation, particularly of immigrant populations, in the U.S. across the twentieth-century, Alexandra Chasin argues that since the 1970s there has been an increasing demand to create groups of niche consumers, alongside national ethnic consumer groups. She claims, “in this context ... ‘diversity’ has become both a social value (however superficial) and an economic imperative” (2000: 107).³⁶ There has been much critical work highlighting the incorporation of gay and lesbians into diversity discourse through the emergence of what Gluckman and Reed describe as ‘the Gay Marketing Moment’ in the 1990s (1997). Spurred on by market research through magazines aimed at upper-middle class gay men, the gay marketing moment characterised gay and lesbians as childless consumers with high disposable incomes, and hence an untapped source of revenue (1997: 3-10). As Hennessy argues, the range of commodities offered to this imaginary, class specific consumer group, has been constituted as a ‘lifestyle’, which mediates the “cultural formation” and “economic function” of the group (2000: 132-133).

³⁴ See Alexander (2005: 81-103), Puar (2006: 61-66) and Boyd (2008).

³⁵ For instance, Pride in London 2014 received an income of £309,921 from sponsorship and grants. The main and highly visible sponsor for the event was Barclays bank. Other sponsors included ASDA (part of the Wal-Mart group), Tesco, Starbucks and Citibank (Pride in London, 2014 Finances – online at <http://prideinlondon.org/about/2014-finances/>, accessed 20th October 2014). While Wal-Mart have a bad reputation for worker’s rights, Tesco were highly criticised at the time for their involvement in the UK Government’s Workfare scheme, where people on benefits were forced to work for zero wages at the threat of losing their benefits. This undermined the labour of paid workers, who were then being replaced by the free, Government subsidised labour of those on workfare, where the amount of money in benefits they received for working 35 hour weeks was less than on minimum wage.

³⁶ For a reading of the significance of the convergence of nationalism and niche marketing, see Puar (2006: 63-67), who cites this passage from Chasin.

However, Ann Pellegrini describes how the interpellation of particular queer subjects as targets of this commodity market, addressed as “*consuming* subjects” and simultaneously “as gay men and lesbians for the first time”, has also had positive effects. She emphasises that this interpellation through consumption developed a relation “between market and identity, and between economic openings and social tolerance” (2002: 135). Furthermore, also emphasising the “profound sense of social validation and legitimation that is experienced by individual gays and lesbians and gay/lesbian communities as a result of increased accommodation *as a market* in capitalist society”, Lisa Peñaloza argues that such inclusive “market segmentation strategies may well seem to operate as democratising mechanisms”, as they also have economic impacts such as the creation of jobs (2008: 306, emphasis added). Such strategies operate through fixed identity categories and the inclusion of “elements of gay and lesbian identity and experience”, which “marketing firms are intent on specify[ing]”, and which distort representations of such experience (308, 315-6). These representations – which have a “mirroring function for gay and lesbian people” and “potentially have an effect upon gay subjectivity and agency” (308) – are strongly classed, whitened, homo- and even heteronormative, functioning through the idealised norms of neoliberal capitalist society. They provide “very seductive” images of “gays and lesbians as gorgeous, well-built, professionally successful, loved and accepted, especially in contrast to the negative treatment” (322). However, the myth of affluent and beautiful gays and lesbians, as Pellegrini argues, has been used against gays and lesbians, as conservatives argue that given the additional spending power of this apparent consumer group, gays and lesbians do not require enfranchisement by law (2002: 135-137). As Puar suggests, market inclusion also benefits nationalist agendas within nations which “proffer placebo rights to queer consumers who are hailed by

capitalism but not by state legislation”, and hence seemingly confers socioeconomic legitimacy in the absence of legal recognition (2006: 62).

Hennessy highlights that the promotion of consumer cultures as ‘lifestyles’ in the 1990s, in spite of and through identity markers, has encouraged consumption practices that reflect a “malleable” and “more porous” individual in the spirit of postmodernism (2000: 133). This favours “the rights of individuals to enjoy new pleasures without moral censure”, as defining individuals by consumer practice seems to have the effect of the dissolution of groups around status, in turn “affect[ing] the formation of sensibilities and tastes” (ibid). However, by proliferating through capitalist economic exchange, such promotion of lifestyles remains “class specific” (ibid). The focus of advertising on consumption keeps the social relations of production and capital’s exploitation far from the view of consumers, especially given that producers are often on other continents. Hennessy claims that the emphasis on the pleasure of consumption within a wider “intensified integration of cultural and commodity production” is part of the aestheticisation of everyday life

by way of the rapid flow of images and signs that saturate myriad everyday activities, continuously working and reworking desires by inviting them to take the forms dictated by the commodity market (132).

This further drives the material production of these “new tastes and sensations” offered as commodified “pleasures in themselves” (132) for the pursuit of profit and the reproduction of capital. These new tastes, sensations and commodity cultures are reserved for those who can afford to partake in them by purchasing. These are commodities marketed through images of queerness, sold with a promise of signifying a bourgeois queerness as an aspect of their

use-value, even if they remain – for example – a pair of jeans. Capital's promise of queerness here operates through advertising images and codes that offer aspirations of upward mobility to poor and/or working class, of colour, or otherwise economically disenfranchised LGBT persons, even if they remain impossibly beyond their reach. In the age of algorithmic target advertising via social media, such advertising has become concentrated and personalised, delivered to us directly via our smart phones with every fifth tap.

As Chasin demonstrates, market address involves reasserting gender normativity onto gay and lesbian consumers, contra feminist and gay liberation-era critiques of such norms (2000: 129-133). The assimilationist and nationalist strategies of 1990s advertising not only made "[t]he assertion that gay men and lesbians are just like straight people", but also asserted that gays and lesbians "can indeed present themselves as men and women ... masculine and feminine, respectively" (133). Thus the marketed images of gays and lesbians, constituting cultural norms that have helped establish homonormativity and transnormativity, necessarily function through the abjection of "those more distanced from and threatening to the mainstream, such as the poor, ethnic/racial/sexual minorities, drag queens, and butch lesbians" (Peñaloza 2008: 322). Hence market inclusion has separated and disenfranchised those who often have less consumer power. This, as Chasin highlights, has the effect of reinforcing the "relation[s] of domination" of white Americans over people of colour and non-citizens (2000: 125).

The positive address of gays and lesbians by the market underwrites neoliberalism's ethos that individual well-being is best advanced by liberating individual freedoms in the market: if you consume, and become through consumption, the images we have sold to you, you will find your individual

freedom and social inclusion. Freedom is here restricted in terms of economic spending power, and hence designed to marginalise those economically disempowered, on low wages or with little material means.³⁷ Hence the address of LGBTQ persons as consumers is a key aspect of enfranchisement and the limits of the privatised politics of queer liberalism. LGBT rights, alongside cultural and market representation, have thus taken the form of a 'new institutional arrangement' that improves the competitive position of neoliberal states on a global area. Roderick Ferguson argues that pursuit of inclusion in institutional modes is necessarily a process of "[f]ormalizing certain forms of difference", which "gives those forms permanence and institutional protection" (2008: 167).³⁸ While public support for LGBT rights has become a widespread, international ethical concern, there has been a proliferation of support by major businesses and banks. Such organisations regularly publicise their 'pride' in their LGBT customers, often in rainbow-themed advertisements, while

³⁷ Furthermore, as Nan Alamilla Boyd argues, the recent laws recognising and legalising gay marriage reasserts LGBT enfranchisement through consumption, as LGBT subjects are drawn into the multi-billion dollar (and pound) wedding industries, as marriage itself becomes the hottest commodity for queer consumers. This is furthermore a global commodity that both feeds the gay and lesbian tourism industry and demands the export of its form to other nations and economies as the mode par excellence of recognising LGBT subjectivity and citizenship recognition (Boyd 2008). Same-sex marriage is hence instrumentalised through the progressive branding of its own form, to reassure the hegemony of Western capital by reproducing the privatised, nuclear family and the couple as the site of consumption, political and legal enfranchisement and state regulation, further consolidating the hegemony of this form of intimacy and of property rights (Eng 2010: 27-28).

³⁸ It is well acknowledged within queer theory that such agendas have been pushed forward by and for predominately white, middle class gay and lesbian organisations and subjects who make the claim within wider society that the need for such rights is the dominant concern of LGBT people while overshadowing grassroots activist work. Dean Spade emphasises that such politics been a "process by which various gender and sexual eccentricities that have been sites of resistance and disruption are rehabilitated through liberal equality, recognition, and inclusion rubrics to become fertile spaces for calls to criminalization, standardized family formation, and military occupation" (Crosby et al. 2012: 135).

maintaining a considerable presence within metropolitan Pride parades. Such support is not merely ethical – it comes in the knowledge that it *pays* to be gay friendly, and that rainbow flags and a lot of glitter may go some way towards capital accumulation.

1.7 The neoliberal incorporation of queer difference

In the latter part of the second decade of the twenty-first century, capital – in various parts of the globe – has little doubt that queer and trans bodies and lives can be a lucrative means through which to pursue accumulation, be that through commodity exchange, debt or the exploitation of devalued labour. Having carefully considered capital's transformation of both the use-values of commodities and labour power, how might our understanding of the natural form of the commodity speak towards the recent transformations of LGBTQ lives and cultures?

Contemporary LGBT social inclusion is an exemplary case of capitalism's innovation, its "need for raw materials and markets [that] has always enacted a quest for the new through a modernizing impulse that is in many ways quite liberatory" (Hennessy 2000: 29). In her discussion of such innovation, Hennessy emphasises the dialectical character of capital as a process identified by Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* – whereby "[a]ll fixed, fast-frozen relations with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-ones become antiquated before they can ossify" (Marx and Engels 1955, cited in Hennessy 2000: 29). The expansion of markets and the

exploitation of 'free' human labour are necessary for the purposes of accumulation:

One the one hand, capitalism has a revolutionary aspect in that it frees up individuals and social relations from fixed, frozen, traditional constraints; on the other hand, the forms this quest for newness takes also close off the emancipatory possibilities of its revolutionary drive (2000: 29-30).

Such revolutions also lead to the development of "new social relations", which "entail new forms of consciousness and identity, including new forms of family and sexuality" (30). As we have seen above in our consideration of the reification of desire, the transformations of capitalist production and consumption have undergirded the spread of new knowledge of sexuality and desire. We have seen that cultural changes may influence the economic sphere, and considered for how one's second skin can account for the (de)valuation of one's labour power. In our contemporary moment, we have witnessed the ascendancy of queer – and to a lesser, more precarious degree, trans – liberalisms, the proliferation of discourses of LGBT rights including gay marriage and employment protections, alongside the institutionalisation of mainstream Pride celebrations backed by corporations and banks. As Miranda Joseph argues in her reading of the "corporate uptake of multiculturalism and diversity", "Diversity... is—explicitly—a *strategy for the expansion of capital*.... [D]iversity discourse locates the production of the communal formation necessary to that expansion directly in the marketplace ... and posits various particular identity communities ... as the goal of the process" (2002: 23, emphasis added). She concludes that "diversity performs a kind of assimilation—an assimilation to corporate culture, to production and consumption—that is simultaneously the articulation of sameness and difference" (23). As Dan Irving argues, corporate diversity has become a

neoliberal 'common sense', and as Irving argues in the case of trans workers historically (2008, addressing trans women in particular) and contemporaneously (2012), corporate institutions are prepared to include workers who are more economically productive.

Neoliberalism's appropriation of LGBT life as a new institutional arrangement operates through the contradictory movement of capital's innovation, that "incorporate[s] and partly reflect[s] the differences it was trying to overcome" (Hall 1997: 32). In an influential lecture theorising the dynamics of globalisation, Stuart Hall emphasises that in overcoming the contradictory terrain of its movement, the "logic" of capital "produce[s] its own forms of expansion"; it is through such expansion that capital has engaged with and 'woven in' forms of particularity (29). Hall highlights that the rising forms of 'global mass culture' (in the 1980s and beyond), that are "centred in the West"³⁹, operate through a "peculiar", "homogenizing form of cultural representation" (28). This homogenization wants to "recognize and absorb" cultural differences into its global mass culture; it is both "enormously absorptive of things" yet "never absolutely complete, and it does not work for completeness" (28). Hence, such homogenisation

is very powerfully located in the increasing and on-going concentration of culture and other forms of capital. But it is now a form of capital which recognizes that it can only [...] rule through other local capitals, rule alongside and in partnership with other economic and political elites. It does not attempt to obliterate them; it operates through them (Hall 1997: 28).

³⁹ "That is to say, Western technology, the concentration of capital, the concentration of techniques, the concentration of advanced labor in Western societies, and the stories and imaginary of Western societies [...] remain driving powerhouse of this global mass culture" (Hall 1997: 28).

Thus, it is through “flexible specialisation” that neoliberal capitalism (or “post-Fordism”), alongside its increasing innovations on a global scale, begins “to address us in our cultural particularity” (Joseph 2002: 17). In her reading of Hall’s work, Miranda Joseph argues that “against the imagined placelessness of global capital” and its tendency to abstraction, capitalism deploys narratives of “the local” or “community ... to invoke [the] particularity of identity, social relationships, and values”; furthermore, the idea “that capitalism now addresses us in our diversity and particularity has been *quite seductive*” (147, emphasis added).

Contemporary neoliberal capitalism operates *through* the accommodation of particularity, as capital flows through LGBT bodies, lives, cultures and supposedly queer commodities, as a recent historical form of neoliberal multiculturalism (Melamed 2006), enabling homonormative and transnormative subjectivity. Such subjectivities, as Puar argues in regard to homonormativity and whiteness, are “mandated by the [nation-]state but negotiable through the market”, “that is, conspicuous consumption and high-skilled labour” – which in turn necessitates the “appearance” of the “queer or homonormative ethnic [who] is crucial for ... diversity in homonormative communities ... and tolerance in ethnic and racialised immigrant communities” (2006: 27-28). Capital’s incorporation of queer difference has operated through partnerships with political elites, such as predominately white, middle and upper class gay and lesbian elites that have dominated and steered the LGBT movement into fighting for civil privileges (such as marriage rights) while reassured economic hegemonies, enabling capital’s flow and expansion. While, as Roderick Ferguson highlights in his reading of Hall’s essay, the critical potential of culture and differences are the reason global capital pursues them –

as the “commodification of difference” can create “new subjects, new genders, new ethnicities” and so on (Hall 1997: 24, cited in Ferguson 2008: 161) – the commodification of difference is never total; the more radical, critical aspects of alterity remain outside the transformations of difference by capitalism. The “capital-intensive terms of visibility” championed by the LGBT mainstream to fight prejudice, which might exemplify capital’s reproduction of reified queer desires in the form of images, also influence the production of queer norms framed in equivalence to heteronormativity (Floyd 2009: 200). Furthermore, Eng argues that through the legal sanction of sodomy and thus homosexual intimacy in private, “homosexual particularity and difference are absorbed into a universalized heteronormative model of the liberal human, an abstract national culture and community” (2010: 30). As Floyd suggests, the identity politics that the LGBT political elite have championed “identifies equality with equivalence” positing “interchangeably gay citizen-subjects” (2009: 199). By positing sameness through our sexual identity as LGBT persons – an acronym that is intended to describe a multiplicity of people from heterogeneous groups – LGBT identities are subsumed under a general equivalence of diversity, multicultural, rights-bearing subjects under capitalism.

Thus it may be argued that the transformation of difference by contemporary global capitalism, enriching discourses of diversity for the benefit of neoliberal capitalism, operates through the abstraction of such difference as identity. The commodification of difference – that is the (re)production of difference through the commodity form – makes such difference exchangeable as value accruing exchange-value. Difference takes the form of consumable objects in commodity cultures, alongside the abstract equality of different labour practices, through the production of values, erasing the qualitative character of the labour of

producers and the worlds in which they work. The identity of objects (and labour) *as values* within the marketplace – as objects of an exchange value – entails an equality between qualitatively different things. Cultural difference is drawn into the sphere of capitalist exchange and circulation, and capital is reproduced through the production and circulation of such difference via the production of value. The price and returns made on the cultural production of queerness and queer life are exactly what has led to the numerous arguments on the pros and cons of the ‘pink pound’ or ‘pink dollar’. The circulation and representation of LGBT life within capitalist cultures and their marketplaces undoubtedly expands their reach; its forms are “repenetrated, absorbed, reshaped, negotiated, without absolutely destroying what is specific and particular to them” (Hall 1997: 29). However, the production of commodities for the purposes of capitalist accumulation fundamentally transforms their reason for existing in the first place, as queer commodities become capital and a means for the pursuit of profit.

We have seen how the movement of commodities and the realisation of value in exchange necessarily involve the exchange of two qualitatively different products via their quantitative equation as exchange values. In the moment of the exchange relation, the natural form of the commodity exists as an excess that cannot be “directly expressed” through its price or exchange value; the natural form is however tied to the capitalist value system through its exchange value. Exchange of commodities or labour-power necessarily involves a moment of identity between two non-identical, qualitatively different things. The appropriation of difference under neoliberal capitalism necessarily involves the reproduction of identity as the reproduction of value through qualitatively diverse, non-identical things, services, practices, communities and cultures –

the reproduction of the natural form of things through their production *as values*, and the reproduction of the conditions whereby certain human activity is commodified and demanded in the labour market, over other forms of activity deemed less or not valuable by capital. Besides this is the unwaged work of social reproduction that is 'indirectly' necessary for capitalist value production, such as the labour that reproduces workers and the conditions of their existence, as I address and cognize in relation to queer life in the following chapter.

Chapter 2: A Queer Marxist [Trans]Feminism: Queer and Trans Social Reproduction

2.1 Wages Due Lesbians and the emotional work of queer life under Thatcher

Arguing for the recognition, “counting” of, and pay for “the particular physical and emotional housework of surviving as lesbian women in a hostile and prejudiced society” (Wages Due Lesbians 1991: 1), the London chapter of Wages Due Lesbians – an international organisation connected to the International Wages For Housework movement – advances a significant queer, theoretical perspective on Marxist feminism which has been marginalised within its canon.¹ A three and a half page list of forms of emotional labour issued by the London chapter for the first *TIME OFF Day*, co-organised by the group on 24 October 1986 as part of the *TIME OFF FOR WOMEN* Campaign (TOFW),² highlights many facets of the emotional work facing lesbian or bisexual women within Margaret Thatcher’s Britain, and thus the difference in the group’s position from straight cis women in Marxist feminist groups:

- Pretending to be ‘straight’ to get some of a man’s wage [...]
- Coping with the fear of losing children, jobs, homes, respect or respectability in your community if you come out as lesbian [...]

¹ Wages Due Lesbians (hereafter referred to as Wages Due) described themselves as “an international network of lesbian women who are Black/of colour and white, with and without disabilities, of different ages/backgrounds, and occupations” (1991: 1). The group were part of the International Wages for Housework Campaign; and the London group continues to exist today under the name of Queer Strike.

² The *TIME OFF FOR WOMEN* campaign pushed “for the implementation of the 1985 UN decision that governments count women’s unwaged work in every country’s gross national product” (Wages Due Lesbians 1991: 1). Wages Due argued “Counting lesbian women’s work ensures that we will not be deprived of the wealth we are entitled to which our work has helped created” (1).

- Coming out – a continuous process of working out when, where, how, to whom, on what occasions [...]
- Wanting to be with women and with men and having to choose in order to fit in somewhere [...]
- Being told you have to be “butch” or “femme” and not wanting to be either
- Wanting to be “butch” or “femme” and being told you can’t
- Being called a “pervert”, “sick”, “disgusting”, “weird”, “dirty”, “abnormal”, “nymphomaniac”
- Wanting to be accepted but not wanting to be normal [...]
- Undergoing family visits and recovering afterwards
- Facing deportation because you have left a man and so have lost your right to stay in Britain, or because your relationship isn’t acknowledged as ‘real’ [...]
- Challenging Black separatists who say its not ‘Black’ or ‘Third World’ to be lesbian and that being lesbian is a white/European contamination or disease
- Challenging/coping with racism, ageism, class prejudice and disability racism (sic) in your relationships with lovers
- Being silenced about violence in relationships with women because speaking out would make us all more vulnerable
- Having to invent lesbian lives [...]
- Having to get by on low women’s wages or poverty-line benefits [...]
- Having to settle for limited places to meet other lesbian women [...]
- Being an unemployed lesbian woman working on the game and having to hide the money when people don’t know how you get it [...]
- Doing emotional and physical work for lovers, friends, family [...] but never being acknowledged for doing it because your relationships are not ‘real’ [...]
- Bringing up children in a hostile society, constantly threatened with having them taken away from us because we’re classed as ‘bad’ or ‘unfit’ mothers [...]
- Fighting anti-lesbian prejudice in housing, social services, the health system, colleges, schools, employment [...]
- Being told that being lesbian means liberation and wondering why you’re still poor, overworked and not happy all the time (1991: 53-56).

The list draws out how the emotional work of lesbian life varies across the different social and material positions inhabited by lesbians and bi women – making visible the necessity of such labour for survival amid a lack of recognition of such work as labour itself. The list highlights the wide-ranging

emotional costs of asserting one's sexual and gender difference, the material precarity this may lead to, and the devaluation of the emotional labour sustaining lesbian relationships within socially conservative, homophobic and racist Britain in the 1980s. This includes the emotional costs of engaging with family and spouses, communities and social movements including lesbian and gay communities, Black communities and other communities of colour – while accessing public services including education and housing, social security and welfare and one's right to remain in the UK. It names the work of challenging homophobia, racism, ableism, and classism in these contexts and in one's workplace – while navigating one's sexual and gender expression and creating a world for their context. It describes the work of having to live and survive on low wages and/or through sex work, or pretending to be straight to access a male partner's wages. It describes the desire to make another world or express oneself differently, the desire for a better life while having to invent a lesbian world with these material conditions – while trying to keep one's family, specifically one's kids, together under the threat of their potential removal.

Given the fundamental importance of a financial means to survive while exploring lesbian self-expression and life – away from the heteronormative family form and a family wage – Wages Due argued that wages for lesbian emotional work would provide queer women “the economic power to afford sexual choices and [such that we] can come out in millions” (1).³ Across 1989-

³ The London group were not alone in this analysis – in her work on the Wages Due Lesbians Toronto group in the 1970s, Christina Rousseau's discusses how Wages Due addressed the “material impossibility” of lesbian visibility and the problem of the low paid, precarious and “feminized job ghettos” (Rousseau 2015: 369-370). See also the recent essay by Beth Capper and Arlen Austin on the archives and sexual politics of Wages Due Lesbians and Black Women for Wages for Housework in the 1970s (Capper and Austin 2018); and sections of Louise Toupin's recent book on the Wages for Housework movement in the mid-1970s (Toupin 2018).

1990, the group supported TOFW's Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill, which was introduced into the UK Parliament in April 1989 by Mildred Gordon MP. The Bill – introduced in a period marked by the Conservative Government's Section 28, alongside protests and riots against the Poll Tax – connected the unremunerated labour undertaken by women globally to the small proportion of income that women receive globally and to their global ownership of assets. It demanded that "All government departments and other public bodies shall include in the production of statistics relating to the gross domestic product, a calculation of the contribution of women's unremunerated work to the formal and informal sectors of the economy."⁴ In her speech presenting the Bill, Gordon MP argued that in counting the unremunerated work of women in GDP, "no one will be able to continue to ignore the extent of dependence of the mighty institutions of the state, industry, commerce and every social organisation throughout the United Kingdom on women's voluntary and involuntary unwaged work."⁵

While Wages Due's list of lesbian emotional work labels *as work* that which is necessary for the affective, practical and communal survival of queer women in a particular historical moment marked by disinvestment and extraction from

Given the time of publication of these texts and their specific focus on the 1970s, I have refrained from engaging with them in this dissertation.

⁴ Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Act 1989. HCA/CHE2/9/40, Women, Hall-Carpenter Archives, London University: London School of Economics Library, Archives and Special Collections. Wages Due Lesbian's co-ordination of TOFW and support for the Bill are discussed address in a Letter to Bernard Crowe, 4th September 1990, Didi Rossi (Wages Due Lesbians), HCA/CHE2/9/40, Women, Hall-Carpenter Archives.

⁵ 'Counting Women's Unremunerated Work' Bill, *Hansard* HC Deb 11 April 1989 Vol 150, No 82, cc747-50. Online at https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1989/apr/11/counting-womens-unremunerated-work#S6CV0150P0_19890411_HOC_198 (accessed 4th April 2018). The Bill was introduced under the House of Commons' 10-minute rule. The Bill was due to have a second reading in July 1989, which appears to have never taken place.

the working classes, the group's work and connection to the Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill implies that lesbian emotional work is already productive labour, insofar as it is an unrecognised contribution to GDP. The theoretical advances made by Wages Due makes visible the fact that, on the one hand, the unpaid work of queer women keeping themselves and their lovers and each other alive (and in the country), and servicing the needs of their sex work clients, contributes to an essential part of the economy – including, but not limited to, the reproduction of labour power. They argue that the state's institutions are dependent on women's unwaged labour, including lesbian 'emotional housework' – that is, the forms of caring labour required for the reproduction of life within a domestic situation and the setting itself. On the other hand, the contemporaneous proscriptions on LGBTQ sexualities, relationality and life put particular pressures on queer women, placing them in precarious and surveilled positions within the labour market and when accessing or working for state institutions and services. Wages Due produced a detailed analysis of the economic and social impact of Section 28 of the UK's Local Government Act (1988), which banned promoting "the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretend family relationship" in schools,⁶ theorising the wider implications of the law for diverse lesbian women amid Margaret Thatcher's disinvestment in the reproduction of the working class. They argued that Section 28 would "increase lesbian mothers' unwaged emotional housework" and the "constant suspicion and scrutiny" lesbian mothers faced; put strain on parental relations; increase neighbourhood surveillance and policing; potentially lead to the forced sterilisation of lesbian

⁶ The law also banned local government from "intentionally promot[ing] homosexuality or publish[ing] material with the intention of promoting homosexuality". Local Government Bill 1988 – Clause 28, quoted in Wages Due Lesbians (1991: 2).

women deemed ‘unfit mothers’, as had been inflicted on disabled women; and potentially force gay and lesbian groups and subcultural spaces to close from economic pressures (Wages Due Lesbians 1991: 15-26). The groups reading of the material impact of Section 28 beyond the pedagogical impact of the policy’s sanctioning of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in schools, highlights the interrelation between homophobic and whorephobic state policies, and the amount of emotional labour groups and communities of queer women undertake to support each other and survive amid an intensified disinvestment in the working classes.⁷

Despite the recent resurgence of Marxist feminism and social reproduction theory,⁸ the social reproduction – that is, the caring, domestic and emotional labour – of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) lives remain under-theorised within this discourse. In Barbara Leslett and Johanna Brenner’s often-cited definition, social reproduction describes “[the] activities and attitudes, behaviors and emotions, responsibilities and relationships directly

⁷ Wages Due understood the connections between sexual agency of queer women, compulsory heterosexuality, and government policies and state harassment of precarious women, especially of sex workers. In a 1977 statement of international solidarity to sex workers facing police crackdowns and gentrification in San Francisco, the London group stated that “[t]he attack which governments are organizing against prostitute women everywhere in the world is an attack on every woman’s right to determine whether, and on what terms, she will have sexual relations with men”. ‘Supporting Statement by Wages Due Lesbians’, Wages Due Lesbians, London, cited in “‘All the Work We Do As Women’: Feminist Manifestos on Prostitution and the State, 1977’ (2012) *LIES Journal* (Issue 1), 217-234, 227.

⁸ See ‘Social Reproduction’ (2015) *Viewpoint Magazine*, Issue 5, online at <https://www.viewpointmag.com/2015/11/02/issue-5-social-reproduction/> (accessed 10 April 2018); the reissue, with a new introduction by Susan Ferguson and David McNally, of Lise Vogel’s *Marxism and the oppression of women: toward a unitary theory* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) [?]; Shahrzad Mojab (2015) *Marxism and Feminism*. London: Zed Books; among others.

involved in the maintenance of life on a daily basis”.⁹ This chapter reads work within queer Marxism and trans studies that has begun to address the socially reproductive character of queer sexual expressions and queer and trans gender expressions for LGBTQ communal formations and the material conditions of such work. The chapter opens with a brief introduction to contemporary Marxist feminist discourse on social reproduction, connecting this to current queer commentary on emotional labour. Building upon the work of *Wages Due Lesbians*, I will consider work within women of colour feminism and LGBTQ activism that is sidelined in social reproduction theory and Marxist feminism, to provide an expanded conceptualisation of trans and queer social reproduction. This includes reading the work and politics of Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), a Third World and Black Gay/Trans Liberation group based in New York in the early 1970s, to concretise a further scene of queer and trans social reproduction from the archive of LGBTQ herstory. While constituted by and working to support the needs of predominately Latinx and Black homeless transfeminine and gay youth, STAR’s political platform demanded an end to racist, homophobic, transphobic and whorephobic state policies and free provisions of what can be cognised as social welfare – namely “free education, health care, clothing, food, transportation, and housing” for “[t]ransvestites and gay street people and all oppressed people”.¹⁰ Indeed, the chronic underfunding or outright refusal to support such services and resources for trans people in particular may be read as a refusal to support trans social reproduction. I conclude by synthesizing an expanded definition of social

⁹ Barbara Laslett and Johanna Brenner, “Gender And Social Reproduction: Historical Perspectives,” *Annual Review of Sociology* (Vol. 15, 1989), 381-404, 382.

¹⁰ STAR, “Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries” [circa 1970], reproduced in Lewis (2017: 76-77).

reproduction to conceptualize and account for the work of the reproduction of queer and trans life.

2.2 Contemporary Marxist feminism and queer emotional labour

Marxist feminism conceptualises socially reproductive labour as the work that reproduces workers as living human entities and their labour power under capitalism, while the latter is exchanged either directly or indirectly with capitalist employers for wages.¹¹ The relationship between socially reproductive labour and Marx's labour theory of value has been contested since the 1970s, primarily around the question of whether domestic labour is "integral" to capitalist production by directly or indirectly reproducing surplus-value, or if it is "unproductive" in an economic sense in that it does not create surplus-value (Weeks 2012: 119). Arguing for wages for housework from the former position, Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James theorise that domestic labour is "extracted" through the site of the 'social factory' – primarily through the (heteronormative) nuclear family¹² and undertaken by

¹¹ For the canon of this argument, see Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, *The power of women and the subversion of the community* (Bristol: Falling Wall Press Ltd, 1975); Silvia Federici, *Wages against housework* (1975, in Federici 2012: 15-22); Lise Vogel, *Marxism and the oppression of women: towards a unitary theory* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1983); Leopoldina Fortunati, *The arcane of reproduction: housework, prostitution, labor and capital* (New York: Autonomedia, 1995). For a detailed reading of social reproduction theory from a queer and trans-inclusive, Marxist feminist perspective, focusing primarily on Vogel, see Holly Lewis (2016, Chapter 2).

¹² My use of the term 'nuclear family' in this chapter refers to its specific institutional function, as an economic unit that coheres through cisnormativity and whiteness. In her reading of Dalla Costa and James, Kathi Weeks emphasises that "the institution of the family serves as an important though obscured component of the wage system; as a social relation of the waged to the unwaged, it is an expansive category that includes 'the unemployed, the old, the ill, children, and housewives'" (2012: 121, quoting James 1976). As I discuss below, Third World

women (and/or migrant women and/or women of colour). In the 1975 'Wages against Housework' manifesto, Silvia Federici emphasises the political importance of wages for housework *as a demand* in the direct struggle against the "social role" of women under capitalism, which demystifies and makes visible the gendered character of housework ("our femininity as work") (2012: 19). "To say that we want wages for housework is to expose the fact that housework is already money or capital, that capital has made and makes money out of our cooking, smiling, fucking" (19). The more recent work of Sara Farris (2015), Federici and others has highlighted that a gendered, racialised division of labour within white, patriarchal capitalist society reproduces the feminized and racialised character of this work across the supposed 'divide' of the Global North and Global South, where women and feminized workers from the Global South (that is, workers of colour) are often responsible for the social reproduction of bodies in or from the Global North. Such work has also highlighted that waged reproductive labour makes up a significant portion of GDP in Western economies (Hester and Srnicek 2018).

While heterosexuality as a form of work has long since been considered a part of Marxist feminism's analysis,¹³ the canon of Marxist feminism has side-lined the material implications of queer sexualities, such as the arguments made by

Gay Revolution argue that the nuclear family is a key site in enforcing the gender normativity required by capitalism in the mid-twentieth century (Jay and Young 1992: 365). Furthermore, as also discussed below, the difference in dynamics of black domesticity, gender and family structure reflect the character of whiteness that coheres the Western nuclear family. Ideologies of independence, as discussed in the work of Robert McRuer below (2007), shore up ableist and heterosexist boundaries of the nuclear family.

¹³ For instance, see Federici's 1975 essay 'Why Sexuality is Work' (2012: 23-27).

Wages Due Lesbians.¹⁴ Despite the often-quoted declaration of the 'Wages Against Housework' Manifesto that "*Homosexuality and heterosexuality are both working conditions ... but homosexuality is the workers' control of production*" (Federici 2012: 15, original emphasis), alongside the more cautious questions of its penultimate paragraph "*can we afford gay relations? Are we willing to pay the price of isolation and exclusion?*" (22), the implications of queer social relations within or while excluded from the social factory of capitalist society, and moreover the recognition of the particular emotional labour of queer and trans life remain almost entirely absent from both the Marxist feminist canon and contemporary formulations.

Contemporary queer femme and trans cultures have addressed how the emotional labour¹⁵ necessary for queer and trans communal survival falls disproportionately on certain femme/feminised, trans, poor, disabled, sex worker, and/or of colour people. Writing in 'A Modest Proposal for a Fair Trade Emotional Labour Economy (Centered by disabled, femme of colour, working class/poor genius)', Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha highlights both the importance of emotional labour *as a form of work* in helping each other survive, in the absence of institutions for social support and alongside the "harm [of] misogynist ideas about care labor, where endless free emotional labour is simply the role our communities have for femme and feminine people" (2017). Linking femmephobia, transmisogyny and sexism more broadly to the lack of respect given to femmes, Piepzna-Samarasinha

¹⁴ See also the politics and praxis of the Gay Liberation movement, calling for the abolition of the nuclear family, and for gay communalism and interdependency (Jay and Young 1992).

¹⁵ Arlie Hochschild originally coined the term emotional labour – Hochschild's conception focuses on the emotional demands of certain labour practices and their management in the workplace. See *The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.

emphasises that poor, of colour, sick, disabled, parenting, sex worker and/or rural femmes still “hold it the fuck down”:

[Y]our life as a working class or poor and/or sex working and/or disabled and/or Black or brown femme person has taught you that the only damn way you or anybody survives is by helping each other. No institutions exist to help us survive – we survive because of each other. Your life is maintained by a complex, non-monetary economy of shared, reciprocal care. [...]

We organize miracles – from complex political actions to the life support work of making sure people are fed, don’t die, don’t get evicted – on no sleep and low spoons and a quarter tank of gas. Our organizing skills in these departments are incredible, and often not respected as much as masculine leaders’, or indeed seen as skills. Far too often, the emotional labor we do isn’t seen as labor – its seen as air, that little thing you do on the side (2017).

Piepzna-Samarasinha emphasises that – within queer communities already marginalised by institutions of capitalist society – it is both the organising skills that go into this work, and the emotional labour it involves, that are not considered skills or labour respectively. As gendered stereotypes play out in queer communities, all that is solid melts into air, while femmes enact reciprocal caring labour acknowledging the nature of this work. In her suggestions for a Fair Trade Emotional Labour Economy based in reciprocity, Piepzna-Samarasinha emphasises the importance of consent over “expectations of automatic caretaking”; of building from the knowledge of sick and disabled people on care, given the particular skills, needs and experiences of sick and disabled people have in giving and receiving care; and that the skills of emotional labour can be learned (2017). She hopes that such an equitable economy would recognise and appreciate the work that keeps queer and disabled communities alive, and that equitability would open space for respect, time off, pleasure and acknowledgement. The modesty of such demands for recognition may be compared to that of TOFW’s demands to international governments and the UN to count and remunerate women’s unpaid labour as

part of GDP. Here, nearly 30 years after capitalist economies failed to do so, the scale of a small, autonomous economic vision of care at the level of queer and disabled communities is enough of a demand to challenge so many sexist, femmephobic and transmisogynist assumptions that continue to inform demands of caring labour under capitalism, even within queer communities.

To centre varied queer and trans bodies in our multiplicities within a theory of social reproduction provides a fresh perspective on (the history of) the boundaries of the nuclear family, and the institutions and policing of heteronormative and ableist racial capitalist society, alongside the role of the state in the maintenance of nuclear families through conservative social and economic policies (such as same-sex marriage and fiscal austerity policies).¹⁶ Contra narrations and theories of social reproduction centred on straight cis women, we see the challenges of the material conditions of (ongoing) social and

¹⁶ Such theory ought to also highlight how heterosexist, racist, ableist and cissexist norms playing out within wider social, economic and scientific regimes (the later arguably rooted in histories of eugenics playing out marginal forms in the present) have policed the sexual reproduction of and access to social services and healthcare for poor queer, trans, disabled and people of colour's bodies – as women of colour feminists, disabled people, trans people and queer and lesbian feminists, in our respective scholarship, activism and its intersections, have argued. Such an ethos to police the sexual reproduction of such bodies has led to forced sterilisation of trans people (trans women in particular), disabled people and certain groups of people of colour; the limiting or refusal of access to reproductive technologies, abortions, and medications; the denial of family rights of LGBTQ family, including the removal of children from parents; the withdrawal of social security and welfare; marginalisation in broad medical provisions; state harassment, incarceration and psychiatrisation of trans and gender non-conforming people; and the refusal to recognise of queer and trans family forms in excess of the monogamous nuclear family – all of which LGBTQ activists have been central in contesting directly or inventing alternatives to since the 1960s. For a black feminist perspective on reproductive justice, see Dorothy Roberts (1997) *Killing the black body: race, reproduction, and the meaning of liberty*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1997. For work addressing the incarceration and psychiatrisation of queer, trans and disabled people, see Liat Ben-Moshe, Chris Chapman, and Allison C. Carey (2014) *Disability incarcerated: imprisonment and disability in the United States and Canada*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

economic disinvestment facing queer and trans people – and women in particular – inhabiting marginal positions within formal and informal economies, and the forms of collectivity that emerge out of the necessity to survive. In the neoliberal period, the ascendant politics of ‘homonormativity’ – described by Lisa Duggan in her now canonical *The Twilight of Equality* as “a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them” (2003: 50) – emerges within conditions of possibility backed by neoliberal capitalist structural adjustment and its transformation of the conditions of socially reproductive labour. Duggan argues that homonormativity is offered specifically with a “promise” of “a demobilized gay constituency and a *privatized*, depoliticized gay culture *anchored in domesticity* and consumption” (2003: 50, emphasis added), noting that neoliberal capitalist social restructuring privatises the ‘costs’ in labour of social reproduction through a disinvestment in social security. Families and individuals who can afford to do so may employ cleaners, nannies, personal assistants, etc., to undertake socially reproductive labour (workers who are often migrant, of colour, and/or otherwise feminised workers). Next to the facilitation of an upward redistribution of wealth and the public financing of businesses, such disinvestment has taken the form of austerity measures, including cuts to social services and welfare provisions, as detailed regarding the UK context in the Introduction. Duggan emphasises that this occurs alongside the political rhetoric that caring labour – including supporting disabled persons, childcare, and adult social care – is a ‘personal responsibility’ of families, rather than that of the state (14). With this disinvestment, the costs of socially reproductive labour – which could be emphasised as both the financial costs of providing for social services and welfare which provides such labour, and the costs in socially necessary labour time of undertaking such

labour – are left to individual families and households to pick up the fiscal slack. Duggan clearly intends for us to consider this material context, undergirding her polemic message that “we get marriage and the military, then *we go home and cook dinner forever*” (62, emphasis added). While Duggan’s comments suggest that the privatisation of such labour is indeed the condition of possibility for privatised, state sanctioned gay monogamy (as *the* form of queer relationality par excellence), she refrains from developing an analysis of the caring labour undertaken within and to sustain queer relational modes.

While arguments that gay marriage reassures a key institution of capitalist society are numerous,¹⁷ queer Marxism has so far paid little attention to the material costs in socially reproductive labour undergirding the inclusion of LGBTQ subjects into the institution of marriage or of neoliberal capitalism more broadly. In the contemporary UK context and as detailed in the introduction, the UK Government’s divestment of capital from the welfare system, as a system of social wages that aids social reproduction of both working and surplus populations, are part of a neoliberal ideological divestment in the poor. As Holly Lewis emphasises “the reproduction of daily life and the reproduction of workers themselves are factors in keeping the value of the working class high and thereby retaining as much quality of life as possible; from the employer’s perspective, the overall goal is to reduce labor’s standard of living as much as possible” (2016: 147). The means through which austerity measures have been enacted disproportionately impact disabled people, people of colour, women, LGBTQ people, and people with a history of migration; hence these cuts can be read as a disproportionate disinvestment in these particular groups. Such

¹⁷ For canonical arguments, see Ryan Conrad (Ed.) (2014) *Against equality: queer revolution, not mere inclusion*. Edinburgh: AK Press; Warner (2001).

groups are more likely bearing the burden of socially reproductive labour while simultaneously being in a more precarious relationship to wage labour, or out of work, without material fall-backs or support. However, as we have seen, the arguments advanced by Wages Due Lesbians and Piepzna-Samarasinha, and as Pitt (Cohen) and Monk (2016) argue, while this decade has seen a fiscal disinvestment in social supports for such groups, the state and its institutions have a history of actively marginalising such groups.

A theory of queer and trans social reproduction ought to connect the particularity of creating and reproducing queer and trans life amid social and material transformations of capitalist society and the spectres of LGBT assimilation, including its disinvestments in the social reproduction of its labour force and those surplus to it,¹⁸ to the cultural praxis that has populated the signifiers gay, lesbian, queer, bi, transgender and trans (with various overlapping aspects, tensions and erasures between these terms) for many decades. Such 'queer world-making' (Berlant and Warner 1998) opposes the virulent homophobia, transphobia, whorephobia, ableism and racism that has been deployed to shore up capitalism, racial and gendered division of labour and the boundaries of the nuclear family across the twentieth century and that finds new articulations in the current neo-fascist period. This chapter begins to synthesise various forms of socially reproductive labour that queer and trans people undertake under conditions of social abjection, stigma and social disinvestment, including inhabiting positions within capitalism's surplus population, arguing that such work undergirds queer and trans community building and social support. This in turn necessitates an expansion of the

¹⁸ Roderick Ferguson provides an important re-articulation of Marx's conception of the surplus population from a queer of colour perspective (2004: 1-18).

concept of socially reproductive labour. To argue that our lives as LGBTQ persons inhabiting varied familial and community formations within a trans and queer socius affected by our material, cultural, social, legal positions within capitalist society, is to give socially reproductive labour a different orientation to the reproduction of labour-power for capital's consumption. If our labour power has historically been devalued and/or undervalued by capital such a conception decentres capital's demand for the labour-power we carry within us. Yet, queer and trans social reproduction as a concept remain attentive to capital's incorporation and transformation of such bodies (and the position of such bodies) in the labour market and capitalist society.

2.3 Queer and trans social reproduction

Queer Marxism and trans studies have made gestures towards forms of socially reproductive labour that reproduce queer and trans lives, workers and worlds. This work is, in part, formulated out of Gayatri Spivak's conception of "affectively necessary labour", which I detail below (1988). Miranda Joseph (2002) and Meg Wesling (2012) have variously argued that the concept of socially reproductive labour may be expanded to include the work that enables queer and trans subjectivity and lives – such as nonprocreative sex, public sex, and the activities that give pleasure, satisfy and enable the expression of queer and trans bodies. Wesling and Jane Ward's (2010) work has emphasised the labour of gender itself – considering the collectivised production of feminine gender expression of a group of *transformistas* in 1990s Cuba; and the emotional labour undertaken by femmes to support and affirm the masculinity of trans men respectively. In addition, Alan Sears' recent work suggests that sexuality is

constructed through socially reproductive labour (2016: 141). Furthermore, Robert McRuer's work has highlighted the relations of exploitation that sustain the able-bodied, heteronormative nuclear family in relation to queer, crip and feminist familial formations (2006).

In her essay 'Scattered speculations on the question of value', which I detailed in Chapter 1, Spivak considers the question of what she describes as a "special case" of "the worker *wishing* to consume the (affect of [their]) work itself" (1988: 162, emphasis added). Within value theory, this can be framed as a case where the use-value of the worker's labour power is desired for the worker herself; the worker's labour power is however owned by a capitalist. From this point, Spivak argues that the "differential" value cannot be simply understood as representing labour in a narrow sense ("as objectified in the commodity") (158). She claims that the case of the worker desiring to consume her own labour "can no longer be seen as the excess of surplus labour over *socially* necessary labour". Spivak argues that "the concept socially necessary labour is based on an identification of subsistence and reproduction" (163), an identification that erases the fact that the labour power owned by capital and those who bear it are reproduced through reproductive work in the domestic sphere. She thus emphasises the importance of attending to "the dynamics of birth-growth-family-life reproduction" (163), yet refrains from doing so in her essay beyond pointing out that the such relations suggest that the subject of "free" labour is "gender-exclusive", i.e. male (167). However, Spivak introduces "[t]he question of *affectively* necessary labor", posited as "*labor* as such", which "brings in the attendant question of desire" (162, original emphasis). This concept lives up to the speculative character of Spivak's essay: while she claims that if such a concept "is proposed without careful attention to the international division of

labour, its fate may be a mere political avant-gardism" (162), she refrains from exploring it further.

Queer Marxism has considered the implications of Spivak's concept. In her book *Lesbian Rule*, Amy Villarejo makes the "presupposition" from Spivak's concept "that the production and appropriation of value apply to affective and social codings" alongside "economic codings" (2003: 35). That is, value production cannot be separated from the creation of these logics. She emphasises the need to "concentrate on the historical coding of affective value", in order to comprehend the potential transformations produced by lesbian desire through its accrual of such value (30-36). In her essay on queer value, Meg Wesling further notes that the concept enables the consideration of work "beyond subsistence and reproduction ... that we would want to acknowledge as labour" – "those activities that work toward the aims of the body's comfort, pleasure, and the satisfaction of desire" (2012: 108). Thus, work within the cultural sphere and "the practices and desires wrapped up in the category of sexuality", that "produc[e] and preserv[e] the space within capitalism" for the desires associated with queerness, maybe conceived as affectively necessary labour that produces "queer value" (122).

The question of how necessity is defined or acknowledged remains unanswered in Spivak's work. In comparison, necessity in Marx's labour theory of value is conceived from the standpoint of (developments in) capitalist production. However, by developing the dialogue between Marxist feminism and queer Marxism, we can elaborate a more nuanced and detailed concept than affectively necessary labour, that accounts for the relationship between the material conditions of queer and trans life and the practices, emotions and behaviours that sustain queer and trans social formations. Necessity is here

defined according to the needs of queer and trans lives and the social worlds that cohere between them, rather than according to a social defined by the needs of capitalist production and accumulation.

Addressing the relation of gender to certain productive practices, Joseph suggests that “[i]f child socialization or heterosexual sexual activity ... can be recognised by [materialist] feminist arguments as valuable labour, then gay sex is also certainly analyzable as a valuable, productive act: productive of relations, identities, communities and social spaces” (2002: 40). Joseph points towards the role of anonymous gay public sex as a form of (re)productive activity, enabling gay identities and defining public gay communal space – such as cruising grounds and parks, bathhouses and also bars. However, Joseph’s otherwise excellent work on the supplementary relation of capital and communities refrains from developing this analysis. Such activity undoubtedly enables queer social formations: the criminalisation of, say, public sex, attempts to stop such behaviour if deemed to have a ‘negative’ effect on an area by a state, thus criminalising queer social formations and public space, and criminalising queer reproductive activity. As with the case of New York City’s zoning laws in the ‘90s/2000s, the impact of such laws are often felt most by queer and trans of colour youth who may also be homeless.¹⁹

¹⁹ There are numerous considerations of the impact of zoning laws on gay male public sex, for instance, see Berlant and Warner (1998) and Floyd (2009: 202-208). One might go as far as suggesting that this has become a critical norm within queer theory centred around cisgender men. For various accounts of how zoning laws, particularly in New York City, have impacted on queer and trans youth of colour and homeless persons, see Shepherd, Rosado and Stanley’s essays in Sycamore (2008: 123-140, 317-328, 329-336). For a consideration of female public sex, see seMbassakwini (2008).

In her elaboration of queer value, Wesling's reading of the 1996 Cuban film *Mariposas en el Andamio* ('Butterflies on the Scaffold')²⁰ highlights the labour of a group of *transformistas* in post-revolutionary Cuba to produce and perform their feminine gender expressions from limited materials. Wesling's reading of the film emphasises the "social utility" of drag – and the laboured production and performance of feminine gender – as pleasurable and "important cultural work", where the situation of gender is importantly understood through the particular social, national and historically specific context of "postevolutionary Cuba" (118, 117). Wesling argues that the success of the *transformistas* performances – to construction workers on their lunch breaks – provide both "a vision of gender as the self-conscious production of human work" (120) and through this "integrate the politics of sexual transgression to the aspirations of a utopian, anti-capitalist revolutionary project" (115).

In her essay considering the collective work of gender transgression between trans men and queer femmes, Jane Ward emphasises the minimal attention that has been paid to the intimate and caring labour which produces transgender worlds, homes and lives within trans studies (2010: 239).²¹ Focusing on such labour, Ward defines the term 'gender labor'

to describe the affective and bodily efforts invested in *giving gender to others*, or actively suspending self-focus in the service of helping others achieve the varied forms of gender recognition they long for. Gender labor is the work of bolstering someone's gender authenticity, but it is also the work of co-producing someone's gender irony, transgression, or exceptionality (2010: 237, author's emphasis).

In this formulation, gender labour is undertaken to support another's gender expression and reflect its validity and the qualities of its performance in the

²⁰ Dir. Luis Felipe Bernaza, 1996.

²¹ Ward specifically cites the first *Transgender Studies Reader* (Stryker and Whittle, 2006).

world. Ward describes such labour as constituting of both the affective labours that “keeps genders... in motion”, alongside the “physical and feminized labors that contribute to the production of queer (and normative) genders (e.g. cooking, sexual services, nursing care, administering gender technology/hormones, chest-binding)” (239). Describing the gender labour that produces various expressions of masculinity and femininity, she emphasises that while “these efforts are often ‘labors of love’ enacted for and by people who are denied gender validation within mainstream culture (women, men of color, queers)”, such labour “must not elide the ways in which gender is reproduced through routinized forms of care work” (239). Ward’s study, undertaking interviews on the West coast of the USA in 2004, specifically considers the intimate labour undertaken by queer femmes – who are the subjects of her interviews – to bolster the masculine subjectivity of trans male (specifically FTM) sexual partners. The orientation of the study allows her to emphasise how “some genders, principally those that are masculine and especially those that intersect with other forms of power (such as wealth and whiteness), make their demands less visible and more legitimate, or deliver them with more coercive force” (239). Arguing that “all genders demand work, and *therefore all people both give and require gender labor*”, she emphasises that “[g]ender labor, like other forms of caring, weighs down most heavily on feminine subjects, the people for whom labors of love are naturalized, expected or forced.”²²

While Ward’s formulation of gender labour is significant and clear, there are questions about trans agency raised by the orientation of her analysis. As her

²² Ward 2010: 239-240, emphasis added; the later clause cites Nakano Glenn, 2004.

interview subjects are queer femmes, describing the labour they undertake to *bolster* the masculinity of their trans male partners, trans subjects are not considered as agents undertaking gender labour within the analysis – even if, by the terms of the analysis, they certainly undertake such labour. If gender labour is indeed part of the collective production of transgression, in Ward’s essay it is elucidated as work done by non-trans²³, feminine subjects for trans men. Like Piepzna-Samarasinha’s work discussed above, Ward’s argument that the production of queerness falls more heavily on feminine subjects, alongside queer theory’s “embrace” of models of life that are “made most possible or necessary for masculine subjects” (241), importantly makes visible how the ‘cost’ in queer socially reproductive labour may fall disproportionately onto femmes. Ward’s essay unfortunately reproduces an evacuation of agency from trans subjects often witnessed within medical professions, legal bureaucracy, the state and arguably queer theory itself. Furthermore, the orientation of the analysis completely erases transfeminine bodies and the gender labour of transfemininity from Ward’s reading of gender labour. However, if we place this next to the analysis of queer value production by *transformistas* as formulated by Wesling, it could be argued that transfeminine subjects in (or from) the Global South often may find themselves at the bottom of a hierarchical, international division of *gender* labour, innovating their genders out of material necessity.

In an essay on queerness *as* a situation of precarity within contemporary London, Joni Pitt (Cohen) and Sophie Monk plot the (in)accessibility of the

²³ I have specifically avoided using cisgender here, given that some queer femmes may not consider themselves cisgender. Given the terms of Ward’s paper and contemporary Femme theory and politics, it seems important not to binarise the terms of cis and trans.

heteronormative household as conceived in Marxist feminism through the familial rejection of queer and trans people (2016). They argue that for “estranged queers”, due to the widespread rejection and abuse queer and trans people face from families, “the responsibility for taking care of oneself and managing one’s life is privatised to the individual”. Living atomised lives within individual bedrooms in shared houses, estranged queers lack the conditions of ‘sharing’ reproductive labour and its costs that occur (if at times coercively) in a heteronormative household. Facing social marginalisation and precarity for one’s queerness or transness within both the workplace and domestic households, they argue that “[t]he proletarian queer is required to do both productive labour – for the wage – and the reproductive work necessary for the continuation of their labour power, through self-care, and the management of their own individual micro-household”. Formulating the negative situation of Piepzna-Samarasinha’s emotional labour economy discussed above, Cohen and Monk write that under such conditions, “proletarian queers”²⁴ fall ill, as “traumas of living in a cis-heteropatriarchal world have to be dealt with alone, or with the care of friends suffering the same conditions: those who are least equipped taking on the responsibilities of caring for another person” (2016). Such suffering is manifest through the context of precarious working conditions for queer and trans people, leading many trans women globally to survive from sex work while they lack employment rights and the conditions to work safely; cuts to welfare and the disproportionate

²⁴ Cohen and Monk’s formulation of the ‘proletarian queer’ deserves to be considered at length. They write: “To be queer is not only to adopt an identity through which one is oppressed through violence and hatred, but is also materially implicated in class relations in a particular way. Even previously instantiated class privilege can be disrupted through forcible ejection from the bourgeois household” (2016). Given the direction of this essay, I refrain from discussing this conception.

impact of austerity as discussed above; and the homophobia, transphobia and biphobia of the UK Home Office in their demands of ‘proof’ for one’s sexuality or gender identity. Cohen and Monk describe “the queer household” as “where the class of immiserated queers is sustained”, such that “we may reproduce subjectivities and bodies that can withstand the violence of capitalism and even confront it” (2016). The authors’ examples of sharing medications, cleaning rooms for depressed housemates, providing each other food, a roof, affection, creating night life as a space of safety, and fighting off street and bathroom harassment, are common themes among queer and trans communities and communal housing projects, such as in the case of STAR (to which I turn below).

In his important book *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*, Robert McRuer historicises the development of the domestic family and the space of the home in the twentieth century as able-bodied space (intersecting with ideologies of domesticity and the family), which can and does relegate disabled people within the hierarchies of social and domestic life (2006). McRuer argues for the importance of recognizing and enacting ‘crip domesticities’ and their possibilities, which productively intersect with queered domestic relationships (2006: 99-100). McRuer highlights interdependent queer, feminist and crip community formations that enable the support, sustenance and nourishment of queer and disabled feminists, particularly in cases where queer and/or disabled people’s relationships are erased and hindered by legal, medical and social institutions (including hospitals, nursing homes and religious institutions). McRuer reads *Why Can’t Sharon Kowalski Come Home?* – a book that details the struggle (across the ‘80s and into the ‘90s) of co-author Karen Thompson and her partner Sharon Kowalski to live together after

Kowalski suffered a debilitating accident. The book addresses the homophobia and ableism bound up with the provision of care from numerous institutions, as hospitals, nursing homes and religious institutions; and the couples' legal struggles with Kowalski's parents over her guardianship and Thompson's participation in her rehabilitation. McRuer emphasises that while Kowalski's father is "unable to imagine a queer and disabled domesticity... confin[ing] Sharon to a nursing home", which "keeps [Sharon] from coming in contact with all those (public) movements and identities that would make queer and disabled publicity (and domesticity) imaginable", Thompson's struggle for guardianship leads her to a public life of activism and queer, feminist and disabled people's communities (2006: 99-100). The political strength of these communities to contest homophobic, sexist and ableist institutions has grown from "an alternative model of home and community, where individuals, couples, and 'families' are dependent on each other and where 'home' is always contiguous to other sustaining locations" (100). This leads Thompson to a critical, feminist conception of interdependency, based in the mutual dependency of queer and crip relationality and domesticity. McRuer argues that "[t]he feminist, queer and disabled relations of interdependency [that Thompson] encounters expose the inadequacies of the able-bodied/heterosexual family", elucidating the structural fictions between the 'private' family and the 'public' sphere, which respectively support "heterosexual and able-bodied intimacy and security" and "sustain relations of exploitation [...] by privileging ideologies of 'independence' and protecting heterosexual and able-bodied identities and homes" (101).²⁵ Such structural

²⁵ As Joseph notes in her reading of community as supplementary to capital, via Marx's *Grundrisse* and Negri, in capitalism's transformation of "precapitalist communities based in natural bonds of flesh and blood, language, division of

fictions and ideologies are crucial for upholding the racial and gendered division of labour structuring the heteronormative, able-bodied nuclear family that devalues disabled and/or LGBTQ people's lives.

To summarize these readings: there is an emphasis on the public character of queer sexuality and its role in defining queer communal spaces; a vision of the collective production of gender and feminine gender expressions; a concept of affective work as gender labour that supports gender expressions; and two conceptions of queer and trans and queer and crip domesticity, respectively, produced through queer households, and queer feminist and disability activist communities. Each of these texts emphasises the interdependent, communal character of supporting the conditions and politics that make queer, trans, feminist and disabled lives more liveable in the face of capitalism. Each reading elucidates a different communal practice of queer and trans gender and sexual expression that performs caring, affective and/or creative labour that directly services LGBTQ communities and lives – each a different vision of a form of queer and trans social reproduction.

How do the proposals elaborated across these texts connect to capitalism's demand for labour-power, whereby the labour of queer and trans people is or may be *directly* mediated through waged relations? Joseph's visions of queer sex as being productive of queer social relations and Ward's conception of gender labour both describe the servicing of bodies that may then undertake wage labour – bodies of genders and sexualities that may be unliveable without such care. In Ward's case, the care work of femmes enables trans men to work

labor...”, “[i]nterdependence and communality are alienated to a realm of abstract liberal citizenship and fetishized in the market as a relation between things” (Joseph 2002: 16).

(within or beyond the service industry). Pitt (Cohen) and Monk describe proletarian queers already burned out from wage labour, struggling with the second shift of socially reproductive labour under-resourced by extra-provisions (institutional, state welfare-based, or collective). McRuer's work describes the lack of legal sanction or social recognition of disabled queer domesticity; however, such domesticity can give rise to interdependency, collectivity and resistance. These forms of social reproduction are structurally external to value production – capital gets its labour power, while the queer subjects who bear it have to work harder on the second shift.

2.4 Domestic Resistance: Women of Colour Feminist perspectives on socially reproductive work

Orienting our analysis of domestic labour around women of colour can enable a different standpoint from which to view of the role of socially reproductive labour from that advanced by much Marxist feminism. In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins argues that black feminist scholarship “suggests that Black women see their unpaid domestic work *more as a form of resistance to oppression* than as a form of exploitation by men”, and that such work “remains a fundamental location where the dialectical relationship of oppression and activism occurs” (1991: 44-46, emphasis added). Furthermore, Hill Collins emphasizes that dichotomy of public and private spheres, equating ‘male’ economic provision with the workplace and ‘female’ affective provision with domestic space holds for neither African Americans, whose families “exhibit ... fluid public/private boundaries because racial oppression has impoverished disproportionate numbers of Black families”, or for poor families, who do not

necessary “equat[e] private with home and public with work” (46-47, citing Stack (1974) and Rapp (1982)). Aida Hurtado and Chandra Talpade Mohanty also emphasize that “the economic conditions that underlie the public/private distinction” have not benefitted women of colour.²⁶

Hill Collins’ argument can usefully be situated in relation to the historical context of chattel slavery. LaKeyma King undertakes a reading of Hortense Spillers that emphasises the contradiction of the social reproduction of gender for Black women, between readings of masculinist and sexist conceptions of gender in work from the Black Power movement and the particular forms of violence that black women experienced during and since slavery.

Gender, according to Spillers, originates within the domestic sphere where the sexual division of labour first manifests itself. For the slave, the ‘home’ is obliterated and replaced by the slave quarters, the opposite of the domestic haven that shields its inhabitants from the evils of society. The absence of a domestic realm within chattel slavery de-genders Black women, relating them to ‘femaleness’ rather than ‘womanhood’ (King 2015: 43-44).

Given that many Black women inhabited a position under the system of chattel slavery wherein the (re)production of one’s gender is theoretically impossible, while inhabiting a site that is the very negation of ‘home’, to have the means of gender self-determination and to undertake socially reproductive labour not under the terms of enslavement may enable forms of resistance – such as providing for a group of people marked for enslaved labour and/or death.

In her influential essay ‘The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House’, Audre Lorde frames the interdependent, Black lesbian domestic space as a site of resistance-through-nurture. Lorde writes that “for women, the need

²⁶ “There is no such thing as a private sphere for people of Color except that which they manage to create and protect in an otherwise hostile environment”, Hurtado (1989, 849), cited in Mohanty et al. (1991: 9).

and desire to *nurture* each other is not pathological but redemptive”, and that with this knowledge comes power (1996: 159). She states that “[i]nterdependency between women is the way to a freedom which allows the *I* to *be*, not in order to be used, but in order to be creative. This is a difference between the passive *be* and the active *being*” (159). Queer of colour domestic space, and the understanding that comes through the desire which forms it, is for Lorde – and also for STAR, as we shall see in the following section – a potent site of knowledge, generating praxis for resistance through survival and through loving and caring labour more broadly. This is knowledge in and through desires that exceed the prescriptions of the nuclear family under capitalism, in a politicised excess of the insertions into the systems of wage labour of the bodies reproduced within the nuclear family.

2.5 Queer and trans of colour domestic resistance: Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries

It is worth noting that, next to the slow pace of theoretical developments to account for the affective labour surrounding queer and trans social formations, worlds and gender expressions, a politicised understanding of the work enabling such formations and the necessity to collectivise such work has long been a part of queer and trans activist praxis, especially that of trans and queer people of colour. Turning our attention to the queer and trans political praxis of the 1970s, and alongside critiques made within the women’s movement, a critique of the “bourgeois nuclear family” as a site of the production of heteronormative and racialised gender conformity was also advanced by the Gay Liberation movement. Third World Gay Revolution (TWGR), who formed

in New York, USA, in Summer 1970, argued that the family was a central site for the perpetuation of heterosexist and homophobic “sex roles” and sexist and cis-sexist “sex definition”, whereby mothers and fathers are instrumental in teaching and enforcing the gendered “behavior necessary in a capitalist system”.²⁷ The collectivisation of socially reproductive labour through the formations of communes were common within the movement – one such example is the work of STAR, the radical Third World and Black Gay/Trans Liberation group founded by Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera in New York, 1970.²⁸ STAR combined caring labour, sex work, prison solidarity and political activism to care for homeless gay and trans (of colour) youth. As Tourmaline, Eric Stanley and Johanna Burton argue in the introduction to *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, “STAR engaged a particular set of issues generally overlooked by the white middle-class gay movement” (2017: xvii). Pointing toward the group’s example of renting a space to create STAR house (which I discuss below), Tourmaline, Stanley and Burton describe STAR’s

²⁷ Third World Gay Revolution, ‘What We Want, What We Believe’ (Jay and Young 1992: 363-367, quote on 365). Karla Jay argues that “*radical* lesbians and homosexuals” as “the negation of heterosexuality and of the nuclear family structure”, who have “as such been driven from our jobs, our families, our education, and sometimes from life itself” - to exist as the negation of these structures entails feeling the brunt of their repressive values (Jay, “Introduction to the first edition”, Jay and Young, lxi, quoting Martha Shelley).

²⁸ While STAR emerged directly out of the gay liberation movement, the group and its members were visible and active in contemporaneous Latinx and Black movements – most specifically Puerto Rican revolutionary organization the Young Lords – and their work took forms similar to that of these movements. I discuss STAR’s connection to New York’s Young Lords and Third World Gay Revolution in detail in my essay “‘out of jail and on the streets again’: Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries and the praxis of transfeminism of color’, Nat Raha, Unpublished Manuscript, Spring 2015. For a brief discussion of Sylvia Rivera’s connection to the Young Lords, see Wanzer-Serrano (2015: 117-119).

small, personal act of resistance and refusal [which] created space for those unruly to the demand of assimilation to come together and to support one another. At a time of heightened violence, just by hanging out with and taking care of one another, the members of STAR were doing revolutionary work (xvii).

STAR's care work – sheltering and supporting Latinx, black and white 'street queens'²⁹ and other homeless gay trans and lesbian youth, in the face of active state and social persecution – was situated in the intersection of gay and lesbian liberation and the Latinx and Black liberation movements of their time – struggles that marginalized *and* welcomed STAR's members in regards to their deviance from racial, class, gender and sexual norms. STAR's work may be read today an example of queer and trans social reproduction centred around prison support, sex work, and collectivized forms of caring labour enacting a transfeminism of colour.³⁰ Such a political praxis remains profoundly important for trans and queer politics today and highlights the need to centre the struggles of racially and/or economically marginalized trans people. The group's members met each other between time on the street, time in jail and at gay liberation meetings. STAR mixed a politics that affirmed the agency of street people, with transgender expression and revolutionary rhetoric of the Black Power and Third World liberation movements. They pursued radical civil

²⁹ 'Street queen' was used as a self-description by STAR's members denoting a classed position of living and/or selling sex on the street. It must be emphasized that STAR were a group of poor, primarily Latinx and black street queens – in Sylvia Rivera's words "[a] majority of the queens were Latin" (Cohen 2008: 134). While Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson occupy significant positions in transgender history and the trans political imaginary, their canonization has often erased their positions as people of colour, street queens, and the political praxes that emerge from such positions. As Jessi Gan importantly emphasizes in the case of Sylvia Rivera, Rivera's visibility and reclamation by trans activists as "transgender Stonewall combatant" have "concealed" her "subjectivity as a working-class Puerto Rican/Venezuelan drag queen" (2013: 292).

³⁰ Connecting STAR's work to the political objectives and organising of the Women's Liberation Movement at the time (despite the active marginalisation of STAR's members by Women's Liberation in New York), Emma Heaney explicitly considers STAR's "politicised care work" as a form of "motherhood" (2017: 266).

rights and social welfare for poor and/or homeless trans and gay people, and undertook prison activism and support.³¹

STAR's activity within the wider gay liberation movement in New York included participating in movement demonstrations and marches (including the Christopher Street Liberation Day Parade); protesting the incarceration of and supporting LGBTQ people in prisons and psychiatric hospitals; partaking in occupations, interventions and 'zaps' (confrontational and theatrical sit-ins) of politicians;³² playing a key role in the collective running of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) affiliated Gay Community Centre, and organizing gay dances to fundraise for STAR.³³ STAR also attended demonstrations led by the Young Lords and Black Panthers, and alongside TWGR and the GLF were "active in the support" of Communist Party (CP) member Angela Davis, in spite of the CP's dismissal of their support.³⁴

Having previously supported street queens and homeless gay youth by sheltering them in hotel rooms and in the back of a trailer, in 1971 the group established STAR House. Renting a building from the Mafia and paying the \$200 rent with money earned through sex work, STAR provided shelter, food,

³¹ Martin Duberman writes that "As a Hispanic, Sylvia strongly identified with those righteous revolutionaries of the Third World, the Black Panthers and their Hispanic counterpart, the Young Lords" (1994: 251).

³² On 'zaps', see Cohen (2008: 178); Benjamin Shepherd cites Arthur Evans' recollection of the Gay Activist Alliance's petitioning of the Village Independent Democrats in 1970, when Sylvia hit a councilwoman over the head. This was described as "climbing up the liberals" (2008: 125-126).

³³ Cohen, (2008: 130-146); Donn Teal (1971: 222). Teal emphasizes STAR's role in the Gay Community Center's organizing collective.

³⁴ *Gay Flames* 7, cited in Teal, 166. Addressing the dismissal of STAR, TWGR and GLF's support by the CP, *Gay Flames* reported that "[w]e can march beside them as long as we do not carry our own banners or camp it up too much. Three times, GLF or STAR people have been thrown off the picket lines. So far, we haven't the numbers to physically resist, be we hope to do so at the next demo, November 20 [1970]".

clothing, friends and political solidarity, for primarily Latinx street queens.³⁵ STAR house consisted of four rooms, housing up to 25 street queens and homeless gays and lesbians at once. The labour producing STAR house as a shelter included fixing the building up for inhabitation (plumbing, etc.) and the production of a politicized space, adorned with “Free Angela Davis” and “Free All Political Prisoners” posters.³⁶ In addition, the labour of prostitution and the money this work procured, supplemented by the maternal care work of Sylvia and Marsha, directly enabled the creation of the space for the survival, support and politicization of poor trans and gay people. Additionally, Stryker writes that STAR intended “to educate and protect the younger people who were coming into the kind of life they themselves led”, and that furthermore STAR “envisioned establishing a school for kids who’d ... had their formal education interrupted because of discrimination or bullying” (2008: 86-87).

STAR House functioned with a generational division of labour: the older group members selling sex to shield the younger queens from the dangers of working on the street, while the younger queens “liberated food” (Rivera 2002: 81-82). This labour built upon the solidarity and kinship among queens working the street – Jessi Gan highlights that on leaving home aged 10 to her new home among queens on 42nd Street Times Square, Sylvia “was excited to find so many drag queens, some of whom adopted her and helped out” (2013: 294). Gan emphasizes the importance of Sylvia’s (and by extension STAR’s) “visions of kinship, family and community” as “both inclusive and dynamic. Like her

³⁵ Cohen, (2008: 131-135).

³⁶ Arthur Bell, “STAR trek”, *The Village Voice* (Thursday 15 July, 1971), pp.1, 46. On their eviction, STAR trashed the building so that their mafia landlord could not benefit from the work they did on the house. Missed rent payments would lead to the eviction of STAR house after around 9 months (46).

lifelong attempts at building ‘home’, they are unpredictable, impatient but generous, provisional yet welcoming” (299).

Located at 213 E. 2nd Street, Manhattan, STAR House was situated in the “primarily Puerto Rican”, working class neighbourhood known by locals as Loisaida.³⁷ Sylvia Rivera recalls that STAR House had a positive relationship with the neighbourhood. She describes STAR’s work as including babysitting for locals and feeding “half of the neighbourhood because we had an abundance of food the kids liberated,” emphasizing such solidarity as “a revolutionary thing” (Rivera 2002: 82). Noting the political, pleasurable space that such work created, Sylvia remarked that “[t]here was always food in the house and everyone had fun”.³⁸ Such forms of care work as activism were not uncommon in the Black Power and third world liberation movements – for instance, the Black Panther Party instituted a program of “Free Breakfast for School Children” and the Young Lords undertook healthcare programs for the Puerto Rican community of East Harlem.³⁹ These programs were often staffed by women – while this care work had a revolutionary function, it was generally conceptualized in a denigrating fashion as ‘women’s work’ by the men of the parties.

The history, work and praxis of STAR as sketched above provide an important example of queer and trans social reproduction, and transfeminism of colour more broadly. STAR’s activism took forms that are significant for the genealogy

³⁷ Cohen, (2008: 131).

³⁸ Feinberg (1998: 108).

³⁹ On the Black Panther Party’s breakfast programs, see “To Feed Our Children”, *The Black Panther* (March 26, 1969), online at <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/black-panthers/1969/03/26.htm> (accessed 11th March 2016) – which notably does not discuss the gendered character of this labor. For more on the latter, see Elaine Brown, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman’s Story* (Anchor Press, 1993)

of queer of colour and women of colour feminist politics of anti-violence, prison abolition and socially reproductive work. In the context of the forms of abjection that devalue the labour power of queer and feminised subjects, denigrated within the racial and gendered division of labour discussed in chapter 1, STAR's praxis asserted that the lives of street queens of colour who were sex workers were valuable, in need of support and worth protecting and nourishing through forms of caring labour, even if their waged labour was stigmatised and worth little money. This is a testament to acting for each other when white, capitalist America and the white middle-class aspects of the gay liberation movement did not recognize the humanity of such lives. From the early '70s to the present day, black feminist politics would affirm and has repeatedly affirmed the value of the lives and work of women of colour. A significant, known example is the response of the Combahee River Collective to the deaths of twelve black women in Boston in 1979. Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick Ferguson argue that the Collective provided an analysis linking the murders, "insisting that race and gender are the names for the processes that ushered these women to their untimely deaths... killed because their lives were not valued and, in this way, were outright extinguished".⁴⁰ STAR's praxis challenged such murderous processes of devaluing feminized people of colour – who were poor, homeless, gender-deviant, queer and/or sex workers. STAR's caring labour asserted that such lives were important and worth loving amid violently oppressive social and material conditions; that their lives were more than the stigmas that attached to them through racial, class and gender subordination and the racial and gendered division of labour. Stigma adheres

⁴⁰ Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson (eds), "Introduction" to *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011), 14-16, quote on 15.

to the second skins of these subjects through the labour they undertook, such as sex work and care work. The labour of queer and trans social reproduction becomes devalued through this context: the need to undertake such work emerges through abjection of its subjects; and the collective organising of such labour becomes a political act, a locus of possibility under extremely negative material conditions.

2.6 Conclusion

Reconceiving socially reproductive labour from the trans and queer perspective enables us to consider such labour as *both* work of resistance that enables our *being and* as unpaid labour work that is valuable and *necessary* for our survival, that can be challenging and pleasurable. This is work that enables our lives and labour power under capitalism, work that may be, in Federici's words, already money for capital (2012: 19). To formulate a theory of queer and trans social reproduction is to expand the concept of social reproduction, making legible the caring, affective and gender labour that enables and maintains queer and trans bodies and lives – the loving and sexual pleasure, cooking and feeding and housing, resting and rearing, cleaning and washing and dressing, the emotional and psychological support, transition support, healthcare support, the work of creating our performative genders and gender expressions, the very fabrication of us. It demands we recognise (the need for) and affirm the work of our survival within hetero- and cisnormative patriarchal neoliberal, racial capitalist society *as work*. This is such that we can try to live and flourish when our lives are either not worthy within such societies, or marked for marginalisation, destruction, or deportation from capitalist nation states. That our labour, love,

caring and the forms of community, sociality and worlds that are produced through such work are important forms of work, despite their minimal production of value for capital, if they have any at all. Such work must be situated within the political economy of the racial and gendered division of labour under capitalism, whereby the labour of feminised, racialised, queer, trans, disabled and/or migrant workers is materially and socially devalued, a division of labour under which we are often poor, often overworked or underpaid or underemployed or unemployed (I return to this in Chapter 5). The devaluation of our work and lives is a historically and culturally specific phenomenon relating to the world of racial capitalism that we inhabit. It is also important to acknowledge that, in capital's rabid drive for commodification, such caring labour has been, is and may be subsumed as a form of low waged work.⁴¹

The reproduction of queer lives and worlds often takes place within communal and sub-cultural spaces, or queer households, that have often remained marginal, emerging outside the confines of the heteronormative nuclear family and the racialised and gendered division of labour that reproduces it. This is not to say that queer and trans bodies, lives and monogamous familial forms are not dependent on, or do not inhabit, domestic space; as Wages Due Lesbians argue, the familial forms we have been inhabiting and creating for decades are often rendered invisible as sites of social reproduction or been actively delegitimised by the state. The limited state recognition of monogamous LGBT family forms today furthermore occurs alongside a

⁴¹ For an elaboration of how transfeminine sex workers cognise the valuation of their work by capital, see Aizura (2014). For a poetic account of a trans femme undertaking low paid caring labour in a dysfunctional care undergoing privatisation and restructuring, see Spott (2017).

material disinvestment in social security and welfare, privatising the costs of social reproduction.

Given the animations of housework as a form of resistance primarily by women of colour and poor/homeless queer and trans women and femmes (and people more broadly) of colour as discussed above, how might queer and trans social reproduction inform on-going political strategies? In the contemporary context of 8th March's International Women's Strike – where in major cities across Europe and the United States women and trans and non-binary people, many of whom are migrant workers, have gone on strike on International Working Women's Day, in protest of wages, gendered pay inequalities, working conditions, social and legal inequalities including reproductive rights, anti-sex worker legislation, lacking healthcare provisions – which include forms of queer transfeminist Gender Strikes⁴² and Sex Workers' Strikes (I address the International Working Women's Day strikes in my poem “on the vision of your futures...”, 376). It should be clear that such articulations and political manifestations emerge from positions of being surplus populations, if not precarious, in respect to capital's demands for labour power and the state's valuations of lives – whether by virtue of welfare cuts or through police surveillance and incarceration. The disproportionate demands of socially reproductive labour on queer and trans, femme or feminised, disabled, and/or of colour subjects occur not only despite but because of the lack of resources held by our communities under capitalism. How might we be able to maintain and build our resources, including our valuable skills in organising caring labour, to ensure our resources and labour work for ourselves, with our consent and ultimately for our communal benefit, while resisting their appropriation by

⁴² See somMovimentonazioAnale, ‘Social Strike: Gender Strike’ (2014).

capital? On the other hand, how can we continue to substantively resist the coercions of capital's demands that we undertake socially reproductive labour for free, while simultaneously dismantling and ending the inequitable capitalist world⁴³ within which our lives are debased and devalued, while the capitalist class turns this into riches?

What role does poetry play in queer and trans social reproduction, and the forms of resistance that emerge through such work? Poetry, as an art form that uses language to make affects and feelings, conditions and situations legible in the world, and that creates emotional and intellectual resonances between readers, can do some of the work of care. Poetry can provide affective solidarity and support, can guide and offer means of resistance. Across some of the poems in *of sirens*, I articulate forms of solidarity and support that reflect caring labour and the affectivity of this labour. These poems were written about or secreted in moments of queer social reproduction and, like other work reflecting queer feminist domesticity (see, for instance, Robinson 2012), they describe and conceptualise the material world in which this labour takes place (see, in particular, '(when we're working while we're asleep)', 306). The string of short poems from "our target to feel here..." to "here in the diaspora..." (335-339) attend to queer, diasporic bodies, baring their weight while inscribing them into the "syntax" of queer social reproduction (336). The figuration of the labouring arms within these poems comes with the promise of the possibilities of what may be created in and through this labour ("possible arms", *ibid*). Provided they refuse external or structural coercions, they may become "*arms of miraculous refusal*", those of the queer femme or feminised person of colour that,

⁴³ I am indebted to Mijke van der Drift for this insight, see van der Drift (2018).

in Piepzna-Samarasinha's words "perform miracles" (2017).⁴⁴ The poem itself opens up the sensation of possibility through these acts of "intensive support", using the first-person plural pronoun "our" as an invitation to belong. "[I]ntensive support" emerges alongside an "intensive valuation": that these acts and the bodies that bare, receive and reciprocate them are worthy of care, despite what is said of, made of, or demanded of them within capitalist society (in terms of what is demanded of them – surplus-value, assimilation, caring labour for free). The "intensive valuation" is an act that proposes the cultural value of these bodies – it understands their "herstor[ies]" and what may emerge from them as "song". However, these moments of cultural valuation must also sustain their "cacophony" through periods and conditions of "fracture" (339) – of bodies themselves and of networks of caring under the pressures of precarity. Furthermore, these sparse poems are laid out across the centre of the page, centring these affects in the reader's perspective, surrounded merely by the white space of the page (without any visual elements of collage). They use spacious punctuation (" , ") and virgules to encourage the reader to linger through the lines. This poetry encourages a perspective that attends to the lines as we would like to see ourselves attended too and to find belonging in the challenges of collective care, while the poems try to tend beyond the page. Poetry may provide the sense that another world is possible, which may make stark material realities more liveable (I address the role of poetry in the survival of forms of institutional violence from psychiatry, in the work of John Wieners, in Chapter 4). However, the limits of poetry as care must be recognised – these poems may be hugs, but they are not roofs over our heads, they are not meals,

⁴⁴ The italicised line, "*arms of miraculous refusals*", is written after Suzanne Césaire's *The Great Camouflage: Writings of Dissent (1941-1945)* (2012), cited by David Marriott during a seminar at the University of Liverpool, Liverpool, 27th April 2016.

they are not checking in on you after a rough week. They are poems about, of, and for queer and trans social reproduction, knowing that other worlds are possible, but many different forms of work are required to make them.

Chapter 3: Queer labour in Boston: The work of John Wieners, Gay Liberation and *Fag Rag*

3.1 Before the Straight Capitol: Situating John Wieners in Gay Liberation

A column recounting Boston's Gay Pride Week 1972 published in Gay Liberation newspaper *Fag Rag*¹ compares the event with the tensions and police surveillance of the previous year as follows

Our march was more a joy and a celebration. The speeches in front of the State House (renamed the 'Straight House') were short and interspersed with chants and poetry. John Wieners read a gay Boston poem; the Good Gay Poets presented an exorcism against the straight man demon. And in the end ... we just sat around on the Common with a little wine and lots of good feelings.²

In the early 1970s, the working-class, gay/bisexual femme, psychiatric-survivor poet John Wieners became involved both in the Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movement and Mental Patients' Liberation Movement in Boston, Massachusetts and beyond. Wieners' involvement in the Liberation Movements included reading poems at Gay Liberation events, such as that detailed above; attending national events as a Gay Liberation representative, including the National Democratic Convention in Miami, July 1972;³ publishing his work extensively in

¹ All references from *Fag Rag* (Issues 1-3, 44) are from copies in the William J. Canfield Papers. Archives and Special Collections, Snell Library, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts. All references from *Fag Rag* (Issues 4- 18) are from copies in the Alternative Press Collection, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

² *Fag Rag* (Issue 4, January 1973), 15. The article refers to Shurin, Aaron (1972) *Exorcism of the straight/man/demon* (Boston: Good Gay Poets). Shurin's broadside was the first publication by the Good Gay Poets, who had been meeting as a group since 1970-71 (Christopher Hennessy 2013: 128).

³ Describing this trip and the politics of the group in Charley Shively's Obituary, Michael Bronski writes:

In 1972 a few members of Boston Gay Men's Liberation, and part of the *Fag Rag* collective, drove to Miami in Charley's blue VW bug to deliver to delegates at the Democratic National Convention a list of ten demands that the group had drafted. The demands were visionary, earnest, and wonderfully theatrical—we knew they were never going to be met, but we wanted them to be heard. They included:

- the disbanding of all "secret police (FBI, CIA, IRS, Narcotics squads, etc.) and uniformed police";

radical Gay Liberation newspapers such as *Fag Rag* and *Gay Sunshine*;⁴ and attending “mental patient liberation meetings”, likely those of Boston’s Mental Patients’ Liberation Front (MPLF).⁵ From 1972–76 Wieners was part of the editorial collective for *Fag Rag*, an anarchist gay male newspaper published in Boston until 1987.⁶ Wieners was also a member of the Homophile Union of Boston (HUB) and part of the Good Gay Poets collective, who would produce and publish his 1975 book *Behind the State Capitol, or Cincinnati Pike*.⁷

Wieners understood that his poetry could be used to support the transformations of everyday life engendered by the Gay Liberation movement. Responding to a questionnaire regarding involvement in Boston’s Gay Community Center’s (GCC) Coffee House, Wieners lists his talents and activities as including “entertainer”, “patron” and “public relations”, and writes: “As a member of HUB, I lend support to GCC, by public performance,

-
- “the return of *all* United States troops to within the United States border” to hasten the end of U.S. imperialism;
 - “an end to any discrimination based on biology,” including the state’s collection of racial and gender data;
 - “rearing children” as a “common responsibility of the whole community”;
 - the legal emancipation of children from their parents;
 - free twenty-four-hour day care centers “where faggots and lesbians can share in the responsibility of child rearing”;
 - and the legalization of all forms of sex between consenting individuals. (Bronski 2017)

Wieners’ diary poem *Playboy*, written primarily while travelling to the convention, was published as a pamphlet by Good Gay Poets in 1972 – it is reprinted in *Cultural Affairs in Boston* (Wieners 1988: 114–128). According to the poem, the convention was attended by other poets including Amiri Baraka and Ed Dorn.

⁴ All copies of the *Gay Sunshine* newspaper referenced come from the Alternative Press Collection, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

⁵ Quote from Wieners’ *Gay Sunshine* interview (Leyland 1982: 261).

⁶ Wieners last appears on the contributor list for issue 18 (Fall/Winter 1976).

⁷ It seems that incarceration in state asylums obstructed Wieners’ involvement in the collective. Describing forming the group in Winter 1971 with Aaron Shurin, Shively names the group as “David Eberly, Ron Schrieber, Charles River, John LaPorta, myself and on occasion John Wieners (sometime incarcerated in Taunton State Hospital)” (‘Poetry Cocksucking and Revolution’, *Fag Rag* 10, Fall 1974, 3–5, quote on 3). A poem by Wieners, ‘Here for the Night’, appears in *Fag Rag* 3 (Summer 1972, 19); it is attributed to the collective’s members, rather than to Wieners. While Shively’s list names no lesbian poets, the Good Gay Poets published Stephanie Byrd’s *25 Years of Malcontent* (1976) and Ruth Weiss’ *Desert Journal* (1977).

via poetry and political action”.⁸ This chapter intends to contextualise the work of John Wieners in relation to his involvement as a poet in the Gay and Lesbian Liberation movement, which is inextricable from his writing from the 1970s and the context of his work’s circulation in the ‘70s and ‘80s. Drawing upon Wieners’ own archives and those of Gay Liberation organisers and newspapers, this chapter situates Wieners’ poetic praxis and its politics, the publication of his work and its under-researched critical reception within the Gay Liberation movement and its press. The following chapter addresses Wieners’ connections to Mental Patients’ Liberation and coalitional work between Boston’s Gay Male Liberation and Mental Patients’ Liberation.⁹

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the poetry of Wieners has found a growing critical reception, which has continued to develop since the publication of *Supplication: Selected Poems of John Wieners* (2015) and *Stars Seen in Person: Selected Journals* (2015). There is also the potential publication of a Collected Poems and the forthcoming publication of *For The Voices: The Letters of John Wieners*, under the editorship of Robert Dewhurst and Michael Seth Stewart respectively.¹⁰ Work by Maria Damon (2011) and Christopher Hennessy (2015) has made important contributions to understanding the socio-political

⁸ Series 1, 1:14, Gay Community Center – Questionnaire, William J. Canfield Papers. Archives and Special Collections, Snell Library, Northeastern University. The Center was based at the Charles Street Meeting House on Beacon Hill, and the coffee house was set up in Spring 1973. The coffee house was open daily, described as having “cheap, gay, fun food and entertainment”, with poetry readings on Saturday nights (*Fag Rag* 5, Summer 1973, 22).

⁹ Wieners’ connections to the Boston GLBT community remained throughout his life, with the community’s institution supporting Wieners until his death. In his reflections on Wieners’ Boston haunts, Jim Dunn writes that Wieners would regularly visit Boston’s Glad Day bookstore, “a long-standing gay bookstore right across the street from the BPL [Boston Public Library]. Whenever Wieners would get paid by check for a reading or for residuals from a publisher, he’d go to the Glad Day to get his checks cashed. The owner of the Glad Day, John Mitzel, was an old friend of Wieners who would always front Wieners money without any expectation of restitution” (Dunn 2012). Mitzel was a founder member of *Fag Rag*.

¹⁰ See Dewhurst and Stewart’s Doctoral Dissertations: Dewhurst, Robert Stuart (2015) ‘Ungrateful city: The collected poems of John Wieners’, State University of New York at Buffalo; and Stewart (2014). I discuss the importance of *Supplication* as a volume in my essay ‘A Queer Excess: The Supplication of John Wieners’ (Raha 2015).

context and sexual politics of Wieners' poetry.¹¹ Hennessy's work also importantly considers poetry published across numerous Gay Liberation papers and journals by a variety of lesser-known writers. Further comments on the importance of sexuality in Wieners' poetry have been made by Michael Davidson (1998), Marjorie Perloff (1975), Andrea Brady (2006, 2007) and John Wilkinson (2007); these authors address the socio-political context of Wieners' writing to varying, albeit limited degrees.¹² However, this literature does not meaningfully address the poet's sexuality and gender non-conformity (beyond Freudian familial models), and has a tendency to individualise the social, political, and emotional struggles felt by many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans people in the decades prior to Gay Liberation.¹³ This includes the naturalisation

¹¹ Damon reads Wieners' poetry as a form of auto-ethnographic lyric penned by a minoritised subject, situated in and speaking of marginal worlds while retaining a (temporal) distance. Damon argues that, in poems such as 'A Poem for Tea Heads' (aka 'A Poem for Vipers'), the socially marginalised poet's "dissociated lyric I", observing itself, functions as a buffer for the trauma of double-consciousness (2011: 181). Christopher Hennessy's doctoral work addresses sexuality and lyric in Wieners' work in relation to Cold War discourses of privacy and the closet, arguing that, by representing and "formally reflect[ing]" oppressions facing the homosexual lyric poet through a form of "queer failure", Wieners' "transform[s] ... the lyric into a vehicle able to critique the closet, [and] the false protection of privacy ethics" (2015: 216).

¹² In an essay critiquing homogeneous erotic poetry spurred by the Liberation movements, Perloff singles Wieners out alongside Adrienne Rich as the two poets of the era producing innovative erotic lyrics (1975: 117-123). Davidson's work argues that Wieners inaugurates a "community of difference" by addressing marginal subjects, deploying "terms of deviance" to challenge the hierarchical logic of (white) heteronormative society and its scrutiny of deviant subjects (as witnessed in McCarthy's Congressional investigation committees) (1998: 275-276).

¹³ For instance, Brady's work on Wieners' archive – during a lengthy consideration of parental figures in Wieners' work – identifies that "Wieners described himself as a hermaphrodite, possessing a woman's mind" (2007: 53, page numbers refer to digital version). Brady makes no attempt to historicise or conceptualise this description. Rather, she emphasises the idealised and demonising representations of women in Wieners' archive, and his idealisation of maternal and feminine roles. Her Freudian reading of Oedipal familial relations (including Wieners' relation to Charles Olson) makes little address to the position of homosexuality within the Oedipus complex, instead pointing to the incest fantasy and placing Wieners within "an infantile position" desiring maternal love (52), which in turn reinstitutes the heterosexism of Freud's model of sexual development in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud 2001). Furthermore, Brady repeatedly emphasises the 'shame' around Wieners' sexuality in relation to living with his family (52-53). While shame in this reading can be redeemed through feminine expression (54), Wieners' personal expressions of femininity remain unaddressed beyond these passing references. Brady comments briefly on Wieners' "feminized persona" in another essay, but only as a means "to express his relative powerlessness [sic] as a lover or as a 'mentally ill person'" (2006: 333). The agency of Wieners' feminine gender expressions (even when they cannot be realised) or empowerment as a psychiatric survivor are evacuated from this reading. Furthermore, shame is a blanket part of the sexual and gender expressions in Brady's 2007 reading, and otherwise divorced from

of the violence of psychiatry and psychiatric incarceration, as I discuss in the following chapter. Furthermore, with the exception of Lisa Tattonetti's *The Queerness of Native American Literature* (2014) and Christopher Hennessy's doctoral dissertation (2015), critical work on Gay Liberation and its media and literature has paid little attention to either *Fag Rag* or the poetry of Wieners.

Situating Wieners' writing in the context of the radical social critique and transformations of the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation movements produces a series of questions regarding the poet's labour beyond the page, and the reception and position of poetic labour when its products circulate within different sub-cultural contexts. It raises the question of what is recognised as labour within the poet's life and archive, especially given the heteronormative readings of Wieners' work and archive and the heterosexism of publishers that gay poets faced. For instance, Wieners' suggested titles for what became *Selected Poems 1958-1984* (1986) included *Queen for a Day* and *She Can Turn on a Dime*, while describing the latter as a "roman à clef",¹⁴ which his publisher John Martin at Black Sparrow Press outright refused:

Very important: when looking for a title, PLEASE nothing "campy" or cute. Queen for a Day is wildly inappropriate. Ditto She Can Turn on a Dime. Look for something literary, dignified and strong. Granted John is a gay poet, but first and foremost he is a poet period.¹⁵

By claiming that these camp titles are "wildly inappropriate" and not "literary", requesting instead "something literary, dignified and strong", Martin

a wider understanding of emotions that have negative homologues in gay cultural production. I refrain from critiquing this further, given the significant emotional labour required to do so.

Christopher Hennessy's work notably fails to address Wieners' gender deviance in his reading of 'Memories of You' and figures of drag queens in the work of Frank O'Hara (simply bracketing them as "other gay men") (2015: 220-226, 2-3).

¹⁴ John Wieners to John Martin, 'Tuesday, July 9, 1984' (Wieners/Stewart, Forthcoming, ?245).

¹⁵ John Martin to Raymond Foye, 9 July 1984, Series 2, 2:63, John Wieners Papers. Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries. The paragraph concludes: "The best art has no gender".

constructs a dichotomy where camp, queer femininity and sex work are positioned outside of the sphere of 'literary' production. By extension, much of Wieners' writing from the '70s, such as the work first published in *Fag Rag* addressing gay sexuality and culture and expressing queer femininity, could be relegated outside of the 'literary' sphere. As I discuss below, such a dichotomy was precisely what *Fag Rag* was trying to dethrone, as the paper argues that such divisions permit gay male poets into the literary establishment only as they remain in their closets.¹⁶

Work within queer Marxism has begun to consider the relationship between labour and queerness (Bérubé, 2011; Tinkcom, 2002; Rhodes 2012; Muñoz, 2009; Rosemary Hennessy, 2013), and the social reproduction of LGBTQ subjects as discussed in chapter 2. Work by Allan Bérubé – a founding member of *Fag Rag* – and Matthew Tinkcom provide two different models of exploring how labour becomes queer as workers undertake jobs that transgress gender and racial stereotypes of work; and how queerness and camp can signify in coded representations through certain forms of labour. In the next section this chapter, by considering and developing this work, I formulate the poetic praxis and political labour of Wieners and the *Fag Rag* and Good Gay Poets collectives as a form of 'queer labour'. This took the forms of activism and the production of the *Fag Rag* newspaper, and thus the circulation of radical political knowledge, consciousness and critique, often through the publication of poetry. By historically situating such cultural production and political work, I argue that the labour of Wieners and of the *Fag Rag* and Good Gay Poets collectives was an important and necessary example of 'queer world-making' (Berlant and Warner, 1998; Muñoz, 2009) for the Gay Liberation era. Such world-making

¹⁶ Shively, Charley, 'Poetry Cocksucking and Revolution', *Fag Rag* 10, Fall 1974, 3-5.

enabled the political, cultural and emotional transformation of life for gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans people (to varying degrees).

In the case of Wieners, such transformations impacted on the reception, circulation and production of his poetry; furthermore, alongside the consciousness-raising and action of the Mental Patients' Liberation, Wieners' poetics of the '70s pursued a radical aesthetics of liberation, exploring gay sexuality and community, queer femininity and transgressive gender expressions, avant-garde camp and a politicised psychiatric survivor consciousness. I discuss the development of Wieners' consciousness as a psychiatric survivor in the next chapter. In the context of the political aesthetics of *Fag Rag*, I will argue that *Behind the State Capitol* (1975), alongside contemporaneous work, emerges from this socio-political context as a poetic experiment to realise such expressions and consciousness in content and form.

First, a brief note on the language of the chapter: in the late 1960s and '70s, 'Gay' was used by men, women, transvestites and gender variant people. Unlike today, it was an explicitly politicised term, intended to describe the right to be free from and unashamed in, and at its most radical to demand the negation of, heteronormative society. This chapter primarily addresses the work of a 'gay male' newspaper collective and thus directs less attention to lesbian cultural production from the same period and location;¹⁷ indeed *Fag Rag* itself was founded following the split of Boston's Gay Liberation Front (into Gay Male Liberation and Lesbian Liberation) and of the paper *Lavender Vision* –

¹⁷ For critical work addressing lesbian cultural production from the Gay Liberation era, see for starters Jay, Karla and Allen Young (eds) (1994) *Lavender Culture* (New York and London: New York University Press); Moraga, Cherrie and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds) (1981) *This bridge called my back: writings by radical women of color* (Watertown, MA: Persephone Press); Bulkin, Elly (Ed.) (1981) *Lesbian fiction: an anthology* (Watertown, MA: Persephone Press); and Bulkin, Elly and Joan Larkin (eds) (1981) *Lesbian poetry, an anthology* (Watertown, MA: Persephone Press). For an account of lesbian life and newspaper production in 1970s Boston, see Hoffman (2007); and for accounts of (Black) lesbian activism in 1970s Boston, see the work of the Combahee River Collective.

from a gay and lesbian paper in 1970, into a lesbian liberation paper in 1971 and *Fag Rag*.

The *Fag Rag* collective's use of the pejorative word 'faggot', as made clear by the name *Fag Rag*, were both points of criticism addressed within the paper. An 1971 editorial in *Fag Rag* 2 highlights the decision to reclaim this denigrating and othering term used by "the straight man", emphasising the pride and anger in not fitting "the ster[e]otyped definitions of manhood Amerikan style" that is "essentially anti-human".¹⁸ The editorial also emphasises that, next to the increasing trivialisation of 'gay' by the straight man, 'faggot' both cannot be co-opted and retains a sense of humour that was reflected in the newspaper's title.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that both the work produced by, and the gender expressions of, the collective's members and the newspaper's content exceed those typical of cisgender gay men – in particular they include some content by, for and about trans-feminine people who self-identified as transvestites (and to a less extent transsexuals or 'half-sisters'). Defining these identifications in 1971, Sylvia Rivera writes that "[t]ransvestites are homosexual men and women who dress in clothes of the opposite sex. Male transvestites dress and live as women".¹⁹ The marginal position and oppression faced by such trans subjects is well documented; furthermore, a group of transvestites writing in *Fag Rag* 3 state that, despite the numerous gay organisations in Boston, "there

¹⁸ 'about *Fag Rag*', *Fag Rag* (No. 2, Fall 1971), 2.

¹⁹ Rivera continues: "Half sisters like myself are women with the minds of women trapped in male bodies. Female transvestites dress and *live* as men. My half brothers are men with male minds trapped in female bodies." See 'Transvestites: Your half sisters and half brothers of the revolution' (reprinted in Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries 2013: 19-20, quote on 19, emphasis added; originally published in *Come Out*). Some difference in usage is likely, and heterosexual transvestites exist; I here intend to emphasise the decision and needs of transvestites to inhabit lives and roles other to those they were assigned at birth. A detailed study of the identities "half sister" and "half brother" in relation to that of transsexual identities and the Harry Benjamin transsexual narrative is yet to be written.

are none that speak to us".²⁰ It is important to recognise that not only did Wieners have sexual relationships with men and women, but the poet was also a drag queen, and his writing includes numerous assertions of trans subjectivity. This includes directly stating "I have a woman's / mind in a man's body" ('Memories of You', Wieners, 2015: 74); regularly inhabiting feminine voices and personae; undertaking public "experiments" with drag and describing dragging up; and featuring drag queens and gender deviant figures in poems – including 'Times Square' (*Asylum Poems*, Wieners 1986: 117) and 1955 poem 'Ballade' (published in *Angels of the Lyre*, Leyland 1975: 216-217), the latter of which details the life and trials of, and the speaker's experiences working with a drag queen named Alice O'Brian.²¹ Furthermore, between 1974-76 Wieners signed various pieces of work in *Fag Rag* with the name Jacqueline Wieners, including the paper's 'Second Five Year Plan' and an otherwise unpublished play 'Harlem Bodyguard', with the signature reproduced in print in these cases.²² In a letter to Neeli Cherkovski, Wieners' editor Raymond Foye recounts a lecture that Wieners gave on Olson and Black Mountain College at Harvard University (in a class taught by Bill Corbett), dressed in an outfit that sounds like an early '70s gay femme take on Marlene Dietrich's infamous outfit from the film *Morocco*:

²⁰ 'Transvestites', *Fag Rag* (No. 3, Summer 1972, 4). For a historical account of the oppression of trans subjects in the 1960s and 1970s, see Stryker (2008a: 59-120). For contemporaneous accounts, see Marsha P. Johnson, Allen Young, 'Rapping with a Street Transvestite Revolutionary: An interview with Marcia Johnson' (Jay and Young 1992: 112-120) and *Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries* (2013).

²¹ 'Ballade' details the life of a drag queen Alice O'Brian – including the physical abuse Alice faced, the speaker's experiences of working with Alice and their engagement with gay bar culture, and Alice's suicide in Charles Street Jail in Boston (Leyland 1975: 216-217). The poem is dated November 1955. 'Times Square' is published contemporaneously to the Stonewall Riot and the activities of members of *Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries*, who included Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson.

²² 'Harlem Bodyguard', *Fag Rag* (13, Summer 1975), pp 6-7; 'Second Five Year Plan', *Fag Rag* (16/17, June/July 1976), inside cover. *Fag Rag* 10 (Fall 1974) features 'Upon Mata Hari Paul Mall', reproduced as handwritten, signed Jacqueline Wieners (5), alongside 'A comparative study of *Studies for an actress and other poems*; *Women's Newspapers*; *Homophile Bulletins*; and *The Underground*', printed with the names John Wieners and Jean Carrigue (22-23). The signature to the work is usually accompanied by the name John Wieners elsewhere in the paper.

On the day of the lecture, he arrived wearing red high heels, pink hotpants, a ladies 1940s tuxedo jacket w. rhinestone buttons, white Brooks Brothers shirt & bow tie, & a Nehru cap. And red lipstick. He lectured in a wonderfully erudite manner for about an hour, and then answered questions from the students. When one student asked why he was dressed this way, he simply replied, 'It's an experiment,' & moved on to the next question.²³

Thus, descriptions of Wieners as a 'gay male' poet must cognize the poet's gender non-conformity alongside Trace Peterson's suggestion that Wieners ought to be considered a "proto-trans poet".²⁴

3.2 Historicising forms of queer work

In his uncompleted work on the history of the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union in 1930s California, Allan Bérubé analysed what he called 'queer work', "work which is performed by, or has the reputation of being performed by, homosexual men and women" (2011: 261). Following the lead of labour historians working on the gendering and racialization of certain lines of employment, Bérubé traces references of queer work to the nineteenth-century, to salesmen who sold fabric to women known derogatorily as 'counter-jumpers'. Across the twentieth-century, Bérubé describes African American men who undertook service work for white families and participated in drag balls; the classifications of certain 'choice' occupations of homosexual men according to a psychiatrist; and the masculine jobs undertaken by many lesbian women serving the US military in World War II (261-263). Bérubé uses 'queer' intentionally to denote the stigma that was attached to such work. Queer work often involved some form of gender transgression when it came to the jobs

²³ Raymond Foye to Neeli [Cherkovski], 16th July 1984, Series 2, 1:44, John Wieners Papers. Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries. Also cited in Brady (2006: 382, fnt 10).

²⁴ Peterson, T. Trace, 'Being Unreadable and Being Read: An Introduction', in Tolbert and Peterson (2013: 15-22, quote on 21)

undertaken; and it should also be noted that not everyone undertaking such work was gay. Considering contemporaneous stereotypically queer work for women and men, he writes:

Many but not all of these jobs are filled by people who are crossing gender roles: jobs where men do women's work and women do men's work, or where effeminate men and masculine women can make a living. Queer work also includes jobs in same-sex environments, especially where women live with women and men live with men, like colleges, jails, and the military. Queer work for men also includes personal service jobs – like waiters – and work that focuses on the decorative, designing and self-expressive arts. Queer jobs range from working class to middle class, but they're usually marginal to the primary labor force (263).

For Bérubé, queer work describes spheres of labour where earning a living while transgressing gender norms is possible, often in same-sex working environments. Sometimes this may entail undertaking “self-expressive” labour, focused on decoration and “personal service”. Furthermore Bérubé astutely notes that such roles were often racialised – either due to segregated workplaces and/or stereotypes around jobs (263). In the case of the queer work undertaken on-board the Matson liner cruise ships around San Francisco bay in the 1930s, Bérubé draws attention to the fact that the work performed by white gay men at sea – who were referred to and referred to each other at work in the feminine, using she/her pronouns – was typically the service work undertaken by African American women on land. Other forms of work aboard the liners were explicitly racialised; for instance, as one participant in Bérubé's oral history remembers, laundry workers were usually Chinese men. Thus queer work on the liners likely developed part of its derogatory character through the fact it involved socially-denigrated working class white men undertaking work typically considered to be Black women's work, transgressing what was expected of the racialised formation of their class.

However, Bérubé also emphasises that working environments where gay men and women were in the majority also enabled the development of queer cultures and sociality on- and off the job, along with specific forms of resistance. Lesbian women and gay men could follow twentieth-century cultural references – including insults – “as signposts to identify what work was queer”, attracting gay and lesbian workers and deterring people who would not want to work among them (266).²⁵ Arguing that such queer work was “a stigmatized ghetto, a trap that confines lesbian and gay workers to a few acceptable jobs”, Bérubé writes that such work could also be a “refuge”, where workers needn’t hide their (sexual and/or gender) deviance and where lesbian and gay people were materialising “our own place in the economy” (266-267). Furthermore, in the case of the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union in the San Francisco Bay area during the period, as the union began to integrate Asian and Black workers, the union’s reputation as queer developed, becoming known as the “Marine Cooks and Fruits”, described as “a third red, a third black, and a third queer” – while Bérubé points out that some workers were all three (267). This constitution became an important point of solidarity, as queens and Black workers fiercely defended each other against hostility on the ships. The union thus developed a slogan that “*If you let them red-bait, they’ll race bait, and if you them race-bait, they’ll queen bait*” (268, original emphasis).

Matthew Tinkcom’s work provides another model of thinking about the queerness of certain forms of labour. In *Working like a Homosexual*, Tinkcom “pervert[s]” Marx, and his 1844 *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (1959) in particular, to posit what he calls “camp labour” – the sensuous work of

²⁵ Bérubé points to the example of lesbian women driving vehicles and working as mechanics in the Army and Marine Corps during World War II, represented as queer by lesbian characters in *The Well of Loneliness* who undertook this work (2011: 266).

producing objects and actions encoded as camp, and the self-consciousness that may be gleaned through such labour (2002: 4, 23). Addressing the films of the '50s and '60s by Vincente Minnelli, Andy Warhol and Kenneth Anger, Tinkcom historicises the labour of gay male subjects working in Hollywood in the era of McCarthyism as moving within a dialectic of concealment and coded expression. Tinkcom understands that in Marx's labour theory of value, capital reduces the qualitative character of human labour to homogenous quantities of value; and furthermore, that capital demands proletarians "make themselves adequate for their abstraction and insertion into the labour process" (Tinkcom, 2002: 8) – both these points seem to prevent the recognition of queerness in value production. By defining camp "heuristically", "as an alibi" for queer men working within and amid the historical contradictions of capitalist production (4), Tinkcom suggests that the abstraction of labour and societal homophobia function together to "suppress camp style *and* specific kinds of work [such as cinematic production and performances] that are enabled by the camp emphasis on stylistic commodity differentiation" (10, original emphasis).

Tinkcom is interested in the consciousness subjects have of their own conditions of labour (23); and highlights the importance of "the political dimensions of camp in the popular form as *a knowledge of, and delight in*, the apparent uselessness that travels with the commodity in its trajectory toward the moment after its seeming consumption" (9, emphasis added). His reading moves in a "contrary direction" to the homogenising abstraction of value production, to ask if the movement of the commodity through the spheres of circulation and consumption might reveal "the fact of its having been shaped by some anomalous labor and laborer" (8).

Given the critical engagement of camp with seemingly valueless objects that have passed beyond the moment of consumption, he suggests that commodities might “betray the knowledge that they were destined to become ‘useless’” (9). Thus, through the embodiment of labour and value in material things and commodities – their natural form, as discussed in chapter 1 – Tinkcom argues that the camp labourer is able to work under the alibi of value’s homogenising abstraction, whereby the commodity *appears* to its recipient as the product of labour in general; but by conceptualising camp as the product of the labour of queers, camp opens the *possibility* that the commodity may be “marked” by such labour in an unforeseen manner, revealing its specific, qualitative production at a certain points in its cycle, or through a *knowing* mode of engagement (23-24, 10). While Tinkcom doesn’t undertake an analysis of the value-form of the commodity, we might say that the labour of camp describes an undercover means of anonymised expression for queer men; to externalise a form of camp expression through the physical body, or natural form, of the commodity, that *may* be picked up by knowing queers at some point during or beyond the cycle of the commodity’s circulation. While the abstraction of the value form of the commodity would seem to prevent any recognition of its producer – removing physical traces of its conditions of production as quantified value – Tinkcom’s argument provides camp consumers with a sense of belonging, activated through the knowledge that someone strapping worked on the object of their gaze. Such a perspective challenges the fetish character of the commodity, by speculatively reading the imprint of an anonymous queer labourer back onto the commodity. As discussed in relation to the work of Stuart Hall in chapter 1, contra Adorno and Horkheimer (1997), in mass culture abstractions such as commodity fetishism “do not work *for* completeness”

(1997: 28). The domain of cultural production, for Tinkcom, seems to provide a potential site of exception to value's homogenising abstraction.

Returning to the labourer, Tinkcom argues that the work of camp is often disguised under the sign of playfulness, as signified by a "lack of seriousness" (13). He argues that the *pleasurable* work of camp provides its active subject the possibility of a glimpse beyond themselves *through* their activity, that is the possibility of the camp labourer exteriorising a camp self-consciousness. Putting a queer spin on the young Marx's consideration of the sensuous, corporeal character of self-consciousness to consider the erotics of labour under capital, he argues that

Marx's recognition of human self-consciousness as 'other' to itself is fundamental to his account, and it is not, as he suggests, an otherness steeped only in negation; otherness from the physical world as a thinking creature and from the social subjects who surround us has its own rewards of knowledge (2002: 25).

Compared to the self-consciousness of negativity when performing estranged labour, camp labour may provide a queer subject the knowledge of his qualitative difference in light of the demands of heteronormative capitalist society – within which labour must be subordinated to the homogeneous reproduction of value and profit for capital through the wage relation. Camp labour enables the queer subject to mark his otherness through labour and pleasurable work, his difference from heteronormative cultures that require social conformity in order to be reproduced, while his difference simultaneously remains under the radar of these heteronormative cultures, recognised only through a particular mode of engagement.²⁶ To elucidate this possibility, Tinkcom considers the "inappropriate emotions" of queerness,

²⁶ Tinkcom develops a distinction between labour and work-as-play in relation to camp labour though Hannah Arendt's critique of Marx in *The Human Condition* (Tinkcom, 2002: 11-13).

“which themselves have strong homologues with the status given to homosexuality within normative imaginations” (26). The *labour* of these emotions in cinema, for instance, is a mode of camp expression; this labour also denotes a consciousness of how to survive the negative reactions and violence of homophobia in the world. Hence, such “labor on the commodity, stage[s] in deflected fashion such forms of affect again in the world” (26). The affective, qualitative character of camp labour in such cultural production thus becomes a mode of exterior expression and production for queer men, to both realise themselves as the subjects of camp, and as a strategy of resistance to homophobia that also creates a coded product of queerness, which can be received by knowing audiences.

Between the two models of queer work and camp labour developed by Bérubé and Tinkcom respectively, we have a historicised conception of queer work amid the racialised and gendered division of labour within pre-World War II, white America, where certain labour practices emanate queerness through the transgression of this division of labour. Through such practices, Bérubé’s research bears witness to the (re)production of queer cultures on and off the job, which enables the creation of particular forms of resistance and resilience. Furthermore, we have a mode of camp labour amid the contradictions of the capitalist production of value, one that enables the exteriorisation of queerness and queer self-conscious through forms of pleasurable work, deflecting the recognition of camp to only knowing audiences. Bérubé’s model importantly understands the historicised, public forms that queer work takes in relation to white heteronormative society; while at a later historical moment Tinkcom’s camp labourer works under the radar, under the alibi of camp hidden through the value-form, read as queer only through particular forms of engagement.

Both models give importance to the affective, qualitative character of this labour, which can provide queer subjects an important outlet for sexual and emotional exteriorisation. While capital demands conformity and homogeneity – varying at different historical moments – from the bearers of its labour-power, which collides with societal homophobia, transphobia and racism, queer subjects find ways to remain engaged in the labour process. The concealment and expression of our sexual and gender deviances may be confronted, or disappeared, by capital and the commodity fetish – at times violently, as witnessed with the *Fag Rag/Gay Community News* fire discussed below.

Building upon the models formulated by Bérubé and Tinkcom, we can propose the concept of queer labour to describe historically situated forms of work labour, within racialised and gendered divisions of labour under capitalism, whereby gender and sexual transgressions may materialise within production, either in the cultural context of the labour itself or through the reception of its products. Under the working conditions of queer labour, certain expressions of queerness may be immediately expressible to one's colleagues and employers, or may become intelligible through particular forms of consumption. Amid the heteronormative cultures of the workplace – which, as Wages Due Lesbians describe in the context of Section 28, can create particular forms of duress for lesbians and other queers (1991: 22-27) – queer labour (or queer work) elaborates a space, both positively and negatively, for gender and sexual deviants to work: as Bérubé describes, it can be both a “a trap that confines lesbian and gay workers to a few acceptable jobs” and a “refuge” (2011: 266-267). Furthermore, queer labour indexes a form of “queer world-making” in the sense formulated by Berlant and Warner and dovetailed by José Esteban Muñoz. Berlant and Warner argue that “every cultural form, be it a novel or an

after-hours club or an academic lecture, indexes a virtual social world". In their formulation

'world', like 'public', differs from community or group because it necessarily includes more people than can be identified, more spaces than can be mapped beyond a few reference points, modes of feeling that can be learned rather than experienced from birthright (1998: 558).

In his reading of minoritarian, queer of colour performers through the workerist theory of C.L.R. James, Muñoz suggests that such performers can be conceived of as workers and "world-historical entities", undertaking "queer world-making as a mode of labor" (2009: 56).²⁷ For Muñoz, performing queerness as a form of labour is "a doing for and toward the future", amid capitalist societies where the "here and now is a prison house" (1). Queer labour may describe the work that posits such worlds – that forges knowledges, cultural products, sites and new needs through which the qualitative difference of queerness is reflected back to its producers, creating networks and enabling affectivities, where its alterity is acknowledged, received and consumed by other queers. Queer labour may create worlds of possibilities that influence, impact and transform the lives and work of others. While queer labour is not production *after* the end of alienated labour under capitalism,²⁸ it is work that

²⁷ See Muñoz (2009: 49-64). Muñoz reads James' momentary examples of supposed, "actually existing socialist realit[ies] in the present" – such as a factory where the division of labour has been restructured by the workers to enable a worker, who was no longer able to carry out his work, to retain his position (55). He relatedly "gestures" to "sites of embodied and performed queer politics" through this reading, to "describe them as outposts of actually existing queer worlds" (49). In his definition, "minoritarian" describes "citizen-subjects, who, due to antagonisms within the social such as race, class and sex, are debased within the majoritarian public sphere" (56).

²⁸ In the closing of his 1844 *Comment on James Mill*, Marx considers what labour would look like if we "carried out production as human beings", once the conditions of alienated labour were superseded, i.e. under communism. He writes that "Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature", in that one would objectify their individuality through labouring; and that "In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature". Such work would be "a

challenges the alienation of labour under capitalism, in part by enabling the collective possibilities of LGBTQ life and communalism by directly producing queer and trans cultures. In the sense that queer labour may enable intimacies that are or have been subject to duress and criminalisation within white heteronormative and ableist capitalist society, such work would necessarily overlap with forms of queer and trans social reproduction.²⁹ Furthermore, the potentiality of queer labour – in terms of what work and worlds become possible – remain mediated by the demands of capital.

Having detailed a number of different theories that interrelate the material realities of queerness and labour, Table 1 details the position of the labour described in each theory and its role within capitalist production.

free manifestation of life, hence an enjoyment of life". The freedom and the possibilities of self-expression and validation expressed by Marx in this text are somewhat different from my and Tinkcom's descriptions of queer labour and camp labour, in that these labours remain bound to the conditions of labour and production under capitalism. The self, or collective, expression that may be enacted through queer labour may enable queer and trans life and may be enjoyable; however it is work that is undertaken when one inhabits an abject position within or adjacent to wage labour – abjection inflected by societal prejudice and a gendered and racialised division of labour. Camp labour explicitly engages with the conditions of homophobia of forms of labour in America in the 1950s.

Nb. Marx's early definition of alienation, or estranged labour in the *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, is considerably different to its definition in *Capital*.

²⁹ Indeed, Muñoz's definition of queerness as an affective "ideality" that "lets us feel that *this* world is not enough" comes with the call to both "dream and *enact* new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds" (2009: 1, emphasis added). This can be read as a tying affective understanding to a Marxist call for social transformation.

| Theory | Type of labour and its relation to value production | Role within capitalist production | Cultural value for queer cultures. |
|--|--|---|---|
| Queer work (Bérubé 2011) | Historicised labour of gay men (1930s), which involves transgression of the racial and gendered division of labour under capitalist production (in the service industry). | Directly producing value for capital. Involved in the production of commoditised leisure experiences. | Cultures of queerness emerge within the social context of this labour, enabled through transgression of the racial and gendered division of labour. |
| Camp labour (Tinkcom 2002) | Abstract conception of historically situated labour by gay men within Hollywood film industry (1950s). | Directly producing value for capital. Uses the relations of wage labour to produce coded expressions of queerness. | Queerness circulates through the commodity form in films; reception of queerness occurs through cultural knowledge, allowing for its development. |
| Queer labour (of <i>Fag Rag</i> , in Boston, etc.) | Non-capitalist, collectivised queer cultural production, which includes producing commodities (newspapers, books). Historically situated labour (1970s, prior to the widespread commodification of LGBTQ culture). | Sometime producing value through commodities – although this labour is not primarily about producing value or profit, and production is not directed towards accumulation. | Working for the realisation of queer life and cultural possibility, within the context of the Liberation movements. |
| Queer and trans social reproduction (Chapter 2) | Social reproduction of queer and trans lives, including their labour power. Historicised to different periods. | Cognises if labour power is sold for wages (directly producing value) or put towards further queer social reproduction (sometimes indirectly producing value through the reproduction of labour power). | Supporting the lives of queer and trans people marginalised within the social division of labour, enabling these lives to be cultural producers, caring labourers and /or political agents. |
| Second skins (Hennessy 2013) | Not a theory describing a particular type of labour. Discusses the example of feminised <i>maquiladora</i> workers of various genders in Mexico (1990s-2000s). | Theory cognises the relationship between cultural value and economic value, including the influence of cultural value on wages and the gendered division of labour. | |

Table 1 – Queer theories of labour and their relation to capitalist production and queer cultural production.

Bérubé's work provides a significant example of how queer worlds can be posited within the capitalist workplace; and the politics of Gay Liberation might be read as forging the demand to radically transform the conditions under which we work and what may be actualised through one's labour. The challenge to the closet of Gay Liberation is not limited to the social sphere, and its demand for the self and communal actualisation of gays, lesbians and other queer and trans people include challenges to overcoming alienated labour and capitalism. As Wieners pens in *Behind the State Capitol*, responding to an essay by Charley Shively, with a highly complex syntax that echoes an idiom of Marx,

A factor of consciousness developing in the gay world, conducive to those or whomever one's audience or prey is straightly reminding one, our people that despite sordid, past histories and oft-inherited bigotry from countless, other civilizations over the face of the earth, expressed to self-indulgence of the most blatant matter, gaining some satisfaction in self-effort, that they are real and different persons with the largest potential of the whole, human race for the realization of their own, since they have been blasphemed for so long, morally good selves (Wieners 1975: 88).

Demanding the fullest possible realisation of gay life, Wieners here articulates the Liberation-era consciousness of the potential of gays and lesbians. As we have seen and as I discuss further below, such a consciousness claims a public and (inter)national stage, and materialises into forms of cultural production and political intervention – such as newspapers, poetry and/or protest – that challenge the alienations of hetero- and cis-normative capitalist society. Compared to the labour that reproduces white heterosexist capitalist society and its subjects, queer labour in the liberation era works to inaugurate alternative publics and worlds.

3.3 The labour of queer world-making in Wieners' San Francisco, 1958

Wieners' 'A poem for cock suckers' (2015: 18-19) captures the beauty and politics of San Francisco's bar scene of the late 1950s, a queer world enabling sexual and gender transgressions while stabilising its legal right to exist.³⁰ "Well we can go / in the queer bars", suggests, simply, the first lines, the plural pronoun "we" invoked in an honest fatalism, "after all / what have we got left". Wieners' use of the possessive plural pronoun "our" – "our long hair", "our songs / of love like the black mama on the juke box" – demonstrates a sense of belonging through the image and pleasures possible here and the social identification of queer persons with other marginal voices such as Black female singers (who may also be queer). "On *our right* the fairies / giggle in their lacquered / voices & blow / smoke in your eyes let them" (emphasis added) – the golden coating of queer beauty and the flirtations of the fairies enable the desiring of the queer bar's patrons and aid them to "retain strength" in "a nigger's [sic] world"; although not uncommon in the logic of white gay people (contemporaneously and in the present day), as Somerville discusses in *Queering the Color Line*, analogies which "assume that being a person of color is 'like' being gay" often "obscure those who inhabit both identifications", positing whiteness as a dominant norm and erasing the historical specificity of both positions (2000: 7-8).³¹ The bars, as Wieners sees them, provide a condition of collective solidity ("The gifts do not desert us, / fountains do not dry") and possibility ("there are mountains / swelling for spring to cascade"). These are

³⁰ Wieners discusses his relationship to San Francisco's North Beach and Tenderloin LGBTQ scenes from the 1950s in his second *Gay Sunshine* interview (Leyland 1982: 274).

³¹ Davidson's reading of 'A poem for cocksuckers' argues that the poet's comparison of "forms of social marginalization", such as of blackness and sexual deviance, "reinforces" his linguistic challenges to the logic of white heteronormative society (1998: 276). This citation of Somerville is also used by Tatonetti in her discussion of *Fag Rag* 18 and Maurice Kenny's disruption of white space and what she describes as "'Indigenous' filler art" in the newspaper (2014: 55-61, citation on 58, quote from 55).

utopian situations, as Andrea Brady suggests, “defined through the poem’s own remastery of abusive language” (2006: 337). However, contra Brady’s suggestion that the poet also “neuters” (sic) these words by “placing such words in a frame of camp or ornate language” (ibid), evacuating and explicitly de-sexualising the political possibilities of camp in the poem, the bars are also concrete sites of queer struggle. In her important book on the queer history of San Francisco, Nan Alamilla Boyd argues that the San Francisco queer bar and tavern scenes of this era had “the greatest amount of community interaction and mounted the heaviest challenge to mainstream law and order”. The bars provided a world for queers and gender non-conforming groups that “expressed multiple and overlapping social identities based on class, race and gender”; these groups “fought to secure public space for themselves”, and furthermore “worked to protect that space from hostile outsiders” (2005: 14). Such labour of both the creation and maintenance of queer space and the sexual and gender expressions flourishing within them was thus a direct challenge to the law and order policing late 1950s California. While the threat of law and order cannot be expunged entirely from the reality shrouding the queer world of the bars (“Take not / away from me the small fires / I burn in the memory of love.”), Wieners’ poem evidences these conditions, which maintain the space and possibility of desire and queer memory:

It is all here between
the powdered legs &
painted eyes of the fairy
Friends who do not fail us
Mary in our hour of
despair.

The body of the fairy, the space between her dressed limbs and decorated, lustrous eyes – of her gender deviance and the work this requires to maintain – holds a queer world ideologically positioned against the reality of the law.

Furthermore, this is an alternative world to that of the Catholic morality that Wieners struggled with throughout the 1950s-70s. The fairy, in her pleasure and beauty, is the antithesis of the Virgin Mary. Wieners writes in 'The Address of the Watchman to the Night' that "the form of the poem, with its order, expressions and release" provides the possibility of "Communion" – with both "the ordinary things of life" and furthermore, the subject of the Wieners' text, "those dark eternal of the nightworld: the prostitute, the dope addict, thief and pervert".³² For the mutuality of such marginalised figures and their "interior beliefs [to] mingle with a cohesion of world" – that is, to achieve communion in a world thus reflected in a poem like 'Cock suckers' – Wieners suggests that the poet must plumb the depths of their lives by "becom[ing] every one of them". Through this, the poet may "let live the divine reign" through the word, such that "The world [is] revealed in a word". As witnessed across *The Hotel Wentley Poems* (1958), here the divine is found in the places that straight white America wishes to destroy on moral grounds – which in 'Cock suckers' is embodied in the figure of the fairy, who provides pleasure, beauty and support to the queer bar's patrons when they are low, blasphemously negates in rhyme the Holy Virgin, in the world of queer communion.³³

³² John Wieners, 'The Address of the Watchman to the Night', in Allen and Tallman (1973: 351-352). Wieners' text is dated "Saturday April 27th 1963".

³³ The word "Mary" is deleted in both Wieners' *Selected Poems* (1972) and *Selected Poems: 1958-1984* (1986). Arguably, given Wieners' challenges to God and religion across *The Hotel Wentley Poems*, the deletion of the word in the republishing of the poem with the retention of the space the word occupied, still carries the echo of the deleted rhyming word:

It is all here between
the powdered legs &
painted eyes of the fairy
friends who do not fail us
in our hour of
despair (Wieners 1986: 36).

Boyd discusses the development of politicised community and support through the bar and tavern scene: following increased surveillance of queer bars and taverns in California across the 1940s,

In 1951, Sol Stouman, the owner of the Black Cat bar, won a state supreme court case against the State Board of Equalization that affirmed the right to serve alcohol to homosexuals. Explicit in this decision was the right to public association, a conclusion that overturned the most effective tool of local policing agencies: the presumed illegality of gay bars and taverns (2005: 16).

Following the case, there was a proliferation of queer bars and nightlife in the city, which was challenged again in 1955 by the state's newly-created Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. However, the owners and patrons of bars challenged the state with a number of legal cases asserting their right to public association and emphasising their "understand[ing of] the power to collective action" as a group in "defend[ing] their territory from police intrusion" (17). Furthermore, the working class life and transgender expressions of the bars were part of a subculture that the contemporaneous homophile movement – who had been active in San Francisco from 1950 – tried to distance themselves from, as their largely white middle-class constituents pursued assimilation into American society (14).³⁴ Threatened by the law, Boyd argues that a "siege mentality" developed within the bars (2005: 17), within which lay the conditions for the "swelling" of queer consciousness, borne out of the labour to protect the public life of these queer worlds and their patrons. The labour of political challenges to the law was necessary for the basic existence of these public queer communities and spaces, and a means to an income for those who ran the bars. Through such work, queer worlds within such public spaces were made possible, including the gender and sexual expressions that emerge and occupy them, alongside the expressions of desire and possibility that are borne in cultural products like

³⁴ For one account of homophile organising in the 1950s among many, see D'Emilio (1983: 57-125).

Wieners' poem. Both the collective work protecting the bars, and the socially reproductive labour taking place within them, enable the conditions within which the fairy holds communion "On our right", captured by the queer poet.

3.4 Making Gay Liberation

We can extend the concept of queer labour sketched above to address the historical moment of Gay Liberation, whereby gay activist labour and that of social reproduction is necessary for the survival and coming into being of lesbian and gay life, as defined by breaking taboos around self and collective proclamation and affirmation, alongside the establishment of a visible gay media and culture. At its most radical, this work intended the transformation of society to enable the life of sexual and gender deviants to their utmost – the production and creation of a sexually and politically revolutionary society. The political consciousness that developed across the '50s and '60s, as we have seen above in the case of gay and lesbian organising among the San Francisco bar and tavern scene, sometimes took the form of a specific struggle against law and order and led to numerous "militant" uprisings against police repression; including, the incident at Cooper's Donuts, a coffeehouse in Los Angeles, May 1959; a less violent incident at Dewey's lunch counter in Philadelphia, April 1965; the riot at Compton's Cafeteria in the Tenderloin District, San Francisco, 1966 (Stryker 2008a: 59-75);³⁵ and the Stonewall uprising in Greenwich Village, New York City, June 1969.³⁶ In each of these queer riots, police harassment

³⁵ For detail on the latter, see also Stryker (2008b) and her documentary *Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria*.

³⁶ Accounts of the Stonewall riot are too numerous to detail. For starters, see Teal (1971), Duberman (1993), Carter (2004) and Stryker (2008a: 82-86). While Duberman's book is sometimes criticised for mistakes on historical details, his work is important given the subjects of his oral history (Craig Rodwell,

centred on street queens; that is, transvestites and transsexuals who had no material means of survival beyond sex work, who lived between hotels and the pavement, and poor and/or working class gay men and lesbians, who primarily or only had access to public queer spaces such as bars or coffeehouses. Many of those rioting were queer persons of colour, who would be distanced by racism from the political organising that followed. The radicalisation of gay and lesbian political organising in the USA formed a continuum emerging out of the more liberal struggles of the homophile movements, struggles for public space such as bars, taverns and cafeterias, and the hugely significant political struggles of the sixties – the Black Civil Rights and Black Power movements, the Anti-War Movement against the U.S.'s imperialist war in Vietnam, the Women's Movement, the New Left, the student movements of 1968, and Native American struggles against U.S. colonialism within North America. The Stonewall uprising was catalytic for national and international gay and lesbian activism, and in New York the weeks after Stonewall would see the founding of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), naming itself in solidarity with the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. While many of those in the GLF and its cells had been involved in the important movements of the '60s and experienced homophobia within these movements, the GLF would importantly pledge and find solidarity with various parts of the 'movement of movements', leading to the support of demonstrations by the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords, among others.³⁷

Yvonne Flowers, Karla Jay, Sylvia Rivera, Jim Fouratt and Foster Gunnison Jr.) and the differences of their experience that intersect with gender, race and class.

³⁷ In Duberman's *Stonewall*, Karla Jay and Jim Fouratt recount their experiences of homophobia in the Women's Liberation movement and the anti-war and Yippie movements respectively. Jay describes her experience and that of lesbian women involved in Redstockings (1994).

Homophobia in the Black Panther Party would become an important issue for the Gay Liberation movement, especially following the publication of Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice* (1968). While the

Gay Liberation as an ideology was based on a critique of the repressive heteronormative social institutions of the state and capitalist society (the police, prisons, psychiatric institutions and psychiatry, homophobic schools and universities), the church, the media, workplaces, and the nuclear family, arguing that sexism is at the root of gendered oppression. It would politicise the slogan 'Gay is Good', arguing, in the words of Martha Shelley, that it is "too late" for a liberal attitude of tolerating homosexuality (Shelley, in Jay and Young 1992: 31-34). As Shelley among others argued, gay men and women existed as the negation of heteronormative society. Addressing "straights" in a second-person address, she writes "we are alien. You have managed to drive your own homosexuality under the skin of your mind – and to drive us down and out into the gutter of self-contempt" (33). In a politicised response and understanding of selves as 'Gay', gay men and women emerge as "the extrusions of your unconscious mind – your worst fears made flesh" (31). Positing Gay Liberation as a form of class struggle, Karla Jay writes in the 1972 introduction to *Out of the Closets*,

We perceive our oppression as a class struggle and our oppressor as white, middle-class, male-dominated heterosexual society, which has relentlessly persecuted and murdered homosexuals and lesbians since the oppressor had power. We are the negation of

rhetoric of the Panthers originally deployed words like 'faggot' to describe white capitalist oppressors, Huey P Newton wrote an important letter in 1970, calling for members of the Party to "relate to the homosexual movement because it's a real thing". Emphasising the oppression of homosexuals in society, including that from the Panthers' own homophobic fear of homosexuality, he writes that homosexuals "might be the most oppressed people in society". Furthermore, he argues that "we must understand [homosexuality] in its purest form: That is, a person should have freedom to use his body in whatever way he wants to"; and, emphasising the potential allies in the Women's liberation and Gay Liberation movements, Newton calls for their "full participation" in "revolutionary conferences, rallies and demonstrations" ('Huey Newton on Gay Liberation', in Leyland (1991: 207-8), also published in *Gay Sunshine* (No. 2, October 1970)). The movements involvement in the People's Revolutionary Conference in Philadelphia, September 1970, saw the Panthers supporting a statement made by the male caucus of Gay Liberation (reprinted in Jay and Young 1992: 346-352), however women and black people in the movement struggled with sexism and issues of white dominance.

I discuss the intersection of Third World Liberation and Gay Liberation groups in New York in my essay, "'out of jail and into the streets": Street Action Transvestite Revolutionaries and the praxis of transfeminism of color' (Raha, forthcoming).

heterosexuality and of the nuclear family structure, and as such we have been driven from our jobs, our families, our education, and sometimes from life itself (Jay and Young 1992: lxi).

Such class struggle is articulated in Wieners' 1973 poem 'Viva', which, compared to Jay's analysis of gay and lesbians having been driven out of White heteronormative 'mentalist'³⁸ capitalist America, figures the struggle of Liberation as a struggle *for* queer life that cannot leave even the familial dead of this society undisturbed:

Drag them out of their places,
for they block the progress of our lives, our times,
drag them out of their graves,
even if they were our parents,
for they barricade the streets of our protest, our loves;

contaminate afternoons with lanterns from poems
by questions of industry and idleness,
(2015: 115)

In the poem's present, straight white America is blockading a liberated future for those it has exiled, as the poem posits the 'poisonous' morality of this "smug aristocracy" through a series of statements beginning with transitive verbs ("barricade", "contaminate", "encourage"). Against the illumination of literary, subcultural forms we hear the echo of straight white America's rhetoric of productivity and productive labour. Even the "graves" of straight white Americans form a half rhyme with "barricade," preventing the public demonstration of Gay Liberation and the desires that grow with it, these seemingly "weird needs" that have "rewards sweet". Indeed white America has "refused to consider" them, answering with the sentences of "poverty" and incarceration in prisons and hospitals. Thus white America's dead block the transformation of life; 'their' living "breed death and young graves," and

³⁸ Chamberlin describes mentalism as a belief in the inferiority of ex-patients, primarily discussing its internalisation by ex-patients, "which must be consciously rooted out" (1978: 173). She argues that consciousness raising and refusing the divisions between 'sick' people and 'well' people, as done in alternatives services run by ex-patients, helps to challenge mentalism (173-176).

“heartless despair” for oppressed peoples (2015: 116), that is the reproduction of straight life and heteronormativity breeds queer social death. The poem closes with a denunciation of straight white American values, piling up alliterative consonants to echo the excess of the toxic plagues of this society: “Stealing beneath bosoms to fester automatically in leeches / As enormous tumours out from the poverty of their lusts.”

Furthermore, Jay’s formulation of Gay Liberation as a form of class struggle includes heterogeneities within this class – the oppression of gay women by gay men, black gays by white gays, transvestites (and other gender-nonconformists) by “straight-looking gays” also gave the need to “combat our own chauvinism, our own sexism, our own racism” (Jay and Young 1992: lxi-lxii). The failure to combat these latter challenges would create major friction within many aspects of the movement, ultimately leading to splits and part of the conditions of this radical political project’s downfall. However, the emphasis of challenging both one’s own consciousness, the consciousness of one’s peers, and that of heteronormative white capitalist society highlights the significant difference of the movement (and other movements of the late ‘60s and early 70s) from the liberal political project that would emerge and overtake it, such as that of the single-issue yet militant politics of the Gay Activist Alliance.

We can argue that the activist labour of the Gay Liberation movement – of demonstrations against repressive state organs and organisations, attending movement meetings and developing activist groups, the work of consciousness-raising groups, writing letters to incarcerated gays and lesbians, creating centres for homeless queer and trans people, writing and publishing poetry, fiction and interviews with queer cultural producers, etc. etc., and (importantly) the forms of social and sexual life that cohere within, between and through such work –

represent the necessary labour for the production of a *world* where Gay Liberation can blossom.³⁹ This is not alienated labour (in the service of the production of surplus-value in order for a capitalist to realise profit) – it is labour that is working against the isolation of queers within capitalist society. At the historical moment of Gay Liberation, queer activist labour directed towards the negation of white heterosexual capitalist society to enable life for sexual and gender deviants importantly involves challenging heteronormative “modes of feeling” (Berlant and Warner 1998: 558), that in Wieners’ and Shelley’s formulations breed social repression and death for gay women and men. Sexuality and gender expressions must necessarily and creatively be re-learned from the normative expressions assigned to certain genders at birth, and the heteronormative lives expected of men and women – varying significantly in regard to class, race, dis/ability and mental health – challenged and reconstructed.

3.5 Printing liberation: *Fag Rag* and Gay Liberation in Boston

Newspapers, providing reports on activism, resources and events, addressing queer social issues, spreading critique, and publishing literature and art, were an important part of the movement, supporting consciousness-raising and cultural production. Contemporaneous to the wider development of the underground, counter-cultural press, the number of gay and lesbian newspapers proliferated from a handful representing the homophile movement of the ‘60s (and earlier) into the hundreds during the ‘70s. John D’Emilio suggests that this explosion was partly due to the fact that in the ‘50s and ‘60s

³⁹ The pages of *Gay Sunshine* and *Fag Rag* regularly included letters from and addressing issues of gay men in prison.

“[m]ainstream journalism had been one of the bastions of homophobia” (Baim 2012: 9). Furthermore, he writes that “[t]he community press was [...] really the only resource other than word of mouth for letting people know that *a new world, a new outlook, and a new community* were in formation” (10, emphasis added). Indeed the methods of producing and typesetting were undergoing a revolution in the late ‘60s and early ‘70s, which enabled the thriving production of countercultural newspapers (Shively 2012). Thus newspapers were fundamental for the world-making of Gay Liberation, enabling the knowledge and the consciousness of *Gay being*. A 1973 *Fag Rag* editorial describes the “elementary level” of this gay world-making that enables subjects to index themselves as Gay: “you give her, him a face, a reality.... We open the pages and let the queers talk about themselves. We listen. And it starts with this fact: I see, I perceive, I think”.⁴⁰ Through engaging with Liberation newspapers, gays and lesbians are able to posit an “I” among a communally produced gay consciousness; these “I”s and the subjects they belong were able to explore and develop themselves through thought, critique and praxis, through the multiple forms of labour and sociality described as ‘Gay’.

Through content and form, newspapers were fundamental in providing reflexive and political critique – where politics involves the diverse forms of queer work. As was the case with *Fag Rag*, newspapers were a significant platform for the revolutionary programmes of Gay Liberation, alongside the quotidian, artistic and creative productions of the movement. Through such labours we see the expansion and spread of gay political consciousness; we see the transformation and politicisation of gay consciousness reflected in the work printed in movement papers, undoubtedly aided by consciousness-raising

⁴⁰ *Fag Rag* (Issue 4, January 1973), reverse cover (n.p).

groups, alongside the production and design of movement papers themselves. Furthermore, while oral history has been an important mode of documenting LGBTQ history and that of other liberation movements, newspapers provide significant documents of the work – practical, material and theoretical – of the movement.

Alongside a significant amount of poetry, *Fag Rag* published influential and controversial essays, literature, graphic illustrations, and photography addressing intersecting issues of gay sexuality, race, cultural production, gender-fucking, prisons and psychiatric incarceration, capitalism, the Left and state legislation. It also published practical information about Boston/Cambridge, MA area resources for lesbians and gay men. While the paper, and its Californian sibling paper *Gay Sunshine*, seem to comprise a largely-neglected piece of gay liberation history, further marginalised by their radical content, the papers have received recent academic attention, in particular from Lisa Tattonetti in *The Queerness of Native American Literature* (2014) and in work by Robbie Dewhurst.⁴¹ In *Beyond Shame*, a book addressing the lost history of “Radical Gay Sexuality”, Patrick Moore briefly highlights the importance of *Fag Rag*’s synthesis of “Gay Fairie sensibility with left politics” and pornography:

Fag Rag is of singular importance because it articulated a far more radical and isolationist view than the earnest coalition-building so common in gay politics. It also resisted a commercialized version of gay life where the “correct” body, disco, gym, and vacation spots were carefully identified as markers of belonging. *Fag Rag* embraced gay male sexuality while insisting on critiquing it from a political perspective and denouncing a uniformity of male beauty (2004: 7).

⁴¹ See Robbie Dewhurst (2014) “*Gay Sunshine*, Pornopoetic Collage, and Queer Archive”. In *Porn Archives*, Tim Dean, David Squires, and Stephen Ruszczycky (eds). Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Moore further highlights the paper's significant commitment to a critique of the class constructions of gay sexual and gender expressions, in part reflected by its attention to "the more 'vulnerable' members of the gay community", including working class people, minors, sex workers and transvestites (8). Moore's reading of the paper is brief, although he argues that its ideas were significant in developing the political consciousness of gay men across the tumultuous 1970s, as single-issue and socially-reformist tendencies became the dominant direction of the gay and lesbian movements.⁴²

In her recovery of Native American poet Maurice Kenny's work, published in *Fag Rag* – the first publication of out queer writing by an Native American writer in the USA⁴³ – Lisa Tatonetti provides a critical reading of *Fag Rag* and work performed by Kenny's "regular inclusion" in the paper, which as she argues "disrupts a sense of these early journals as largely white and at the same time enlarges the parameters and concerns of a coeval literary moment Kenneth Lincoln termed the 'Native American renaissance'" (2014: 31).

Winston Leyland, editor of *Gay Sunshine*, has emphasised the important role of the two papers as leading outlets for both the literary and socio-political aspects of what he describes as the "Gay Cultural Renaissance" – the "rediscovery of the Gay Cultural heritage and its expression, especially since Stonewall, through art, music, literature, film and many other ways" (1991: 19). Poet Aaron Shurin describes the papers as "the primary theoretical agents for the emerging

⁴² Moore's reading of *Fag Rag* as "isolationist" ought to be understood in the context of the shift of gay and lesbian politics towards single-issue organising (around 'gay issues' only, i.e. white middle class and often cisgender gay male issues, rather than coalitional issues with other liberation movements). *Fag Rag* repeatedly refused this form of politics and also refused separatism in regards to their own politics.

⁴³ Kenny's work first appears in *Fag Rag* (10, Fall 1974) – the '69 Poets' issue. Tatonetti provides a detailed reading of the different forms of work Kenny published in *Fag Rag* and *Gay Sunshine*, situating this work as part of a queer literary heritage of the Brooklyn Bridge, emphasising its diversions and re-encoding of two spirit history and Gay Native experience in the 70s and its representations of age and disability (2014: 28-66).

gay literary sensibility” (Christopher Hennessy 2013: 128); and in the case of Charley Shively’s work, the papers took liberation politics to controversial extremes. As Leyland suggests, publication in such papers also provided an important retroactive space for writers to ‘come out’ and for the reception of their experiences (1975: 12). Describing the physical growth of *Fag Rag*’s size and the amount of poetry included in the publication, Tatonetti writes:

By the time Kenny was first published in *Fag Rag* – issue 10, fall 1974 – the size of the newspaper had doubled, with most issues averaging thirty pages. The number of poems included in each edition had increased exponentially as well, and, as opposed to the practice of the early issues, most subsequent poems were attributed, though not always titled, from *Fag Rag* issue 5 onwards. In addition, the newspaper often interspersed two-page sections of poetry with the essays, letters and art that made up each issue (2014: 34)

In the pages of these papers, we see a rapport between queer expressions and the worlds of such experience as addressed throughout Wieners’ work and the work of other Gay writers, and the experiences of the readership of these internationally-circulated newspapers.

The papers saw the publication and critical reception of Wieners’ writing in the early-to-mid 1970s alongside that of numerous gay male writers and activists, American and international, past and present, including Jean Genet, Gore Vidal, Tennessee Williams, Allen Ginsberg, Peter Orlovsky, Jonathan Williams, John Giorno, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, Abu Newas, Maurice Kenny, W.H. Auden, Taylor Mead, Steve Jonas, Frank O’Hara, Joe Brainard, Robert Duncan, Tommi Avicoli Mecca and Anne Waldman. In 1973, Wieners was interviewed as part of *Gay Sunshine*’s influential interview series of gay writers; and was featured prominently in gay male poetry anthologies published in the

'70s.⁴⁴ Leyland described Wieners' *The Hotel Wentley Poems* as "the pioneering book" by a gay poet in the '50s, and gave the poet significant space in his gay male poetry anthology *Angels of the Lyre* (1975: 8). Shively was a key champion of Wieners' writing within this context, composing numerous essays on the poet. Shively describes Wieners as "virtually the poet laureate of gay liberation", praising the magical quality and honest expressions of desperation, despair and camp that characterised pre-liberation gay life in Wieners' poetry, highlighting these aspects as "lanterns" "[l]ighting paths through and beyond straight life" (as echoed in Wieners' 'Viva' and 'The Lanterns Along the Wall', 2015: 181-185).⁴⁵ Wieners also responded to Shively's radical liberation politics in his poetry, such as Shively's essay 'Indiscriminate Promiscuity as an Act of Revolution', in which he argues that capitalism has influenced gay desire and the sexual valuation of certain bodies over others.⁴⁶ Furthermore, Wieners and Shively appear kissing in a photograph on the cover of *Fag Rag* 44 (1987) (see Figure 2). Rudy Kikel also penned essays on Wieners' writing.⁴⁷ However, while many of the above writers have been canonised inside and outside the sphere of LGBTQ literature, Wieners has become marginal to this canon – in the words of

⁴⁴ Wieners' *Gay Sunshine* interview features in No. 17 (March/April 1973). It was also anthologised in *Gay Sunshine Interviews Vol. 2* (Leyland 1982) and reprinted in edited form in Wieners' *Selected Poems 1958-1984* (1986), editing out a discussion of police surveillance. Young, Ian (Ed.) (1973) *The Male Muse* (Trumansberg, N.Y.: Crossing Press) – the anthology prints 'Love-life', 'Feminine Soliloquy', and 'Paul'; and Gay Sunshine Press' *Angels of the Lyre* (Leyland 1975: 212-223), which gives eleven pages to Wieners' work, printing 'Impasse', 'Act 2', 'A Poem for the Old Man', 'Ballade', 'The Old Man', 'In Love', 'Contemplation', 'Gusta with Madame Simone de Beauvoir', 'How to Cope with This?' and 'Two Years Later'.

⁴⁵ Review of John Wieners, *Selected Poems* (1972), in *Gay Sunshine* (No. 16, Jan/Feb 1973), 20.

⁴⁶ Throughout the '70s, Shively authored a series of radical and controversial essays on gay sexuality and sexual revolution, such as 'Cocksucking as an Act of Revolution', 'Indiscriminate Promiscuity as an Act of Revolution', etc. In the latter text, Shively argues for a "socialism of love and sex" and, emphasising the materiality of bodies, he proposes the need to love all bodies indiscriminately of race, age, beauty, sex or national origin (Leyland 1991: 257-263, 261; first published in *Fag Rag/Gay Sunshine: Stonewall 5th Anniversary Issue* (Summer 1974)). Wieners responds to this article in *Behind the State Capitol* with the poem 'A Popular Belief as Practiced: Indiscriminate Promiscuity' (1975: 88-89).

⁴⁷ Kikel, Rudy, 'Mythic Meaning in the Late Poetry of John Wieners', *Boston Gay Review* (No. 2, Spring 1977), 7-10.



Figures 1 & 2: Covers of *Fag Rag* (No. 1, June 1971; No. 44, 1987).

Issue 1's cover "spoof[s] Grant Wood's classic 1930 painting *American Gothic* with a pencil drawing that includes the dark-coated, bespectacled farmer of the original, still clutching his pitchfork. In contrast, however, his partner is not a stern white woman but a bald, slightly pudgy white man wearing a buttoned-up shirt, overalls and a kindly smile" (Tatonetti 2014: 32).

Issue 44's cover features John Wieners in a floral shirt, waistcoat and a large badge featuring Jackie Kennedy on his collar, lightly kissing Charley Shively, who wears a denim jacket and a flower in his top buttonhole. They appear to be at a demonstration in 1978. The photo is credited to Demian.

Black Mountain classmate and fellow queer writer Michael Rumaker, he remains one of the “invisible old fags”.⁴⁸

The labour of queer cultural production, the circulation of newspapers, the spread of poetry like that of Wieners’, enables the political, social, intellectual, creative, sexual and affective realisation of a world that held the promise of Liberation.⁴⁹ This was work largely unwaged, performed outside the reproduction of capital within heterosexist society; but by no means entirely outside, as writing, typesetting, printing and distributing newspapers required money and physical labour. Situating *Fag Rag* as one of many GLF newspapers produced across North America – alongside *Come Out* (New York), *Gay Liberator* (Detroit), *Body Politic* (Toronto), *The Furies* (Washington DC), *Amazon Quarterly* and *Gay Sunshine* (Oakland and San Francisco), Shively argues that publication itself “could be an act of liberation”, as it decentred the power of media and publicity, giving space to viewpoints even marginal within the Gay Liberation movement (2012). In addition, Tattonetti suggests that Maurice Kenny’s work appearing in *Fag Rag* and *Gay Sunshine* in the 1970s constitutes an “intervention into the dominant narrative of *Fag Rag*” (2014: 64). Reading *Fag Rag*’s use of decontextualized images and art referencing ‘Indigeneity’ as “‘Indigenous’ filler art” (58), she argues that the white settler colonial logic reproduced through the two newspapers is disrupted by Kenny, where poems such as his two ‘Papago’ poems “quietly break through this white noise to challenge the politics of the gay literary renaissance” (59-61, quote on 61). Besides the space given to marginal voices including that of incarcerated gay

⁴⁸ Rumaker, Michael (1998) ‘Boston Tea Party’, *Oyster Boy Review* (No. 8), online at <http://www.oysterboyreview.org/archived/08/rumaker2.html> (accessed 9th October 2015).

⁴⁹ However, we mustn’t ignore the fact that the worlds produced by the work of gay liberation reproduced hierarchies of sexism, racism, classism, transmisogyny, ableism and ageism.

men, Native American writers, and to transvestites, we might consider Wieners' own writing as one such marginal voice, given its radical aesthetics and its authorship by a working class femme drag queen psychiatric survivor. The labour producing these papers in which radical ideas and marginal voices could be published against the norms of white heterosexist capitalist culture provided a significant, democratising space – if still a white space capable of being disrupted – as a queer social world; and leaves an important archive of such worlds, through which we can trace the labour of their production and the struggle and duress facing such work.



Figure 3: Boston MA Gay Liberation, Boston Gay Pride June 1972, from *Fag Rag* (4, January 1973), 15.

The GLF in Boston, Massachusetts developed out of the Student Homophile League, the latter of which met at Boston University and produced a newsletter.⁵⁰ Like numerous other GLF groups, Boston GLF had a flash-in-the-pan existence, from April to September 1970.⁵¹ Out of this climate came the production of newspaper *Lavender Vision*. The first issue was published in

⁵⁰ The *Boston Student Homophile League Newsletter*. In a letter to Wieners dated 22 February 1970, Shively writes to Wieners of an exchange with a female faculty member at Boston State that will be published in the paper, in which he quotes a poem by Wieners. Shively invites Wieners to the next SHL meeting (March 1970) and writes that “[s]ome of the people in the Homophile League would be interested in hearing you read” (Charley Shively to John Wieners, 22 Feb 1970, courtesy of Michael Seth Stewart).

⁵¹ For an account of the GLF in Boston, the micropolitics around its existence, and details of movement events in Boston 1970-1971, see Kyper, John (2009) ‘Coming Out and Into the GLF: Banned No More in Boston’, in Mecca (2009: 31-39).

November 1970 and produced with half the paper devoted to lesbian content and half to gay male content. However, charges of male domination in GLF meetings and the resultant necessity for autonomous lesbian organising would lead to the dissolution of the Boston GLF and its “reconstitut[ion]” as Gay Male Liberation (GML) and Gay Women’s Liberation.⁵² This led to the production of the second issue (and final) issue of *Lavender Vision* in May 1971 by lesbian women, alongside which appeared *Fag Rag* in June 1971, and the formation of the gay male collective that oversaw the latter.⁵³

The production of *Fag Rag* was an endeavour of collective and politically minded labour. The paper was edited, compiled and typeset collectively, operating on a not-always-realised ethos of skill sharing; however, as few people involved in the paper had experience in publishing (except for Allen Young, who had worked at the *Liberation News Service*) and some people had some training in typing and photography, producing the paper enabled the development of skills. The paper was circulated nationally, numbering 5000 copies at times; and was a deviant quarterly, only once managing to publish four issues, in 1974. Tatonetti writes that “[t]here was rarely a set publication schedule for the newspaper during its sixteen-year run, and in fact, the fall 1971 editorial commentary in the second issue addressed the difficulty the volunteer editorial staff had in producing *Fag Rag* issue 2 at all due to disagreements over the content and scope of the publication” (2014: 32). *Fag Rag* also produced

⁵² Kyper, ‘Coming Out and Into The GLF’ (Mecca 2009: 35). *Lavender Vision* (Issue 1, No. 2, May 1971) details information regarding Boston Gay Women’s Liberation meetings in May 1971 (2). William J. Canfield Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Snell Library, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts.

⁵³ Shively also suggests that part of the shift of *Lavender Vision* to be a publication by gay women came after “most of the male staff members moved to San Francisco” (2012). The issue of *Fag Rag* as a Gay Male newspaper – and not a paper compiled by gay men and lesbians – would be repeatedly addressed and responded to in the letters section of the paper (typically on the first pages of the paper). This demonstrates a need by its publishing collective to consistently refer back to the papers’ origin in the lesbian / gay male split of *Lavender Vision*.

Street Sheet, a weekly, mimeographed publication with announcements and news that was distributed for free. In the 1970s, the paper was produced on an IBM Composer, which had a changeable typeset ball and could justify text. Given its gay and political content, and its rejection of commercial advertising, the paper had trouble with homophobic printers and grant-funders. Printers were able to refuse and censor material, while other printers that were sympathetic to the paper and its politics were also targets of FBI repression. However, the paper did receive sporadic grants in the mid-1970s from the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines (although these promptly ended with Ronald Reagan's 1981 election).⁵⁴ Furthermore, in 1970 few bookstores would carry the newspaper, and one bookstore in Cambridge, Massachusetts even threatened members of the paper collective. The paper did receive wide distribution through demonstrations and Gay Pride events, as well as through the few gay and lesbian bookstores – such as the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookstore in New York – which were significant outposts for movement newspapers (Shively 2012).

Alongside the emergence of *Fag Rag* from Boston's GLF was the emergence of Good Gay Poets, who in the words of Carl Morse "issued an important series of poetry books by lesbians and gay men".⁵⁵ Good Gay Poets organised a poetry reading series in Boston (see Figure 4) and published Wieners' 1975 collection *Behind the State Capitol: or Cincinnati Pike* and the 1972 *Playboy / We were there! ...*

⁵⁴ Shively describes the lack of response *Fag Rag* received from the CCLM in 1972-73. After offering to present their "gay rage case" in person, the paper received annual grants between 1974-77, and further grant in 1980. The newspaper's politics created contention among the CCLM, who variously threatened to cut off their grant. Shively also discusses how "Reagan simplified the NEA [National Endowment for the Arts] so that artists could clearly identify it and the government as their out-and-out enemy" (2012).

⁵⁵ Morse, Carl and Joan Larkin (eds)(1989) *Gay and Lesbian Poetry in Our Time* (New York: St Martin's Press), xviii. Good Gay Poets published work by Stephanie Byrd, David Eberly, Sal Farinella, Maurice Kenny, Charley Shively, and Ruth Weiss. For work addressing Maurice Kenny's 1979 *Only So Far as Brooklyn*, published by Good Gay Poets, see Tatonetti (2014: 29, 61-62).

a gay presence at the Democratic convention pamphlet. Next to their involvement with Boston's GML and Good Gay Poets, members of the *Fag Rag* collective were active in various projects including Boston's Gay Community Centre, gay commune-collectives, a prison-mental hospital group/Boston's MPLF, a twenty four hour gay phone, consciousness-raising groups among others.⁵⁶ The group took part in public protest, including protesting the 1971 Miss America competition in Atlantic City alongside numerous other groups, the 1971 May Day demonstrations in Washington DC, and a zap of the Eastern Psychological Association and the Massachusetts Psychological Association in Spring 1972 – contemporaneous to Wieners' incarceration in Taunton State Hospital, Massachusetts, as I discuss in the next chapter.⁵⁷

The homophobic repression – including from the State and its capital interest – threatening such radical work, was demonstrated in the 1982 arson attack on *Fag Rag*, *Gay Community News*, and gay bookshop Glad Day's shared offices at 22 Bromfield Street in Boston's Downtown Crossing. In an essay reviewing Wieners' *Selected Poems 1958-1984*, Shively details the increasing harassment of the newspapers' offices, alongside the policing of gay public sex sites, in the late 70s/early 80s: "[m]ysterious break-ins, bullet holes, phone threats of death and fire so frequent, soon our back windows were totally gone, replaced by aluminum and then iron bars".⁵⁸ During a season of arson attacks in Boston – rumoured to have been instigated by off-duty firemen and police officers after *Fag Rag* led a demonstration for "the abolition of the vice squad" during Gay Pride season – the fire destroyed the means of production, archives, stock and

⁵⁶ Shively 2012; Shively, Charley (1973) 'Reviews' of *The Gay Liberation Book* (Richmond and Noguera (eds) (1973)) and *Out of the Closets: Voices of Gay Liberation* (Jay and Young [1992]), *Gay Sunshine* (17, March/April 1973), 8.

⁵⁷ Shively (2012); 'GML ZAPS Witchdoctors', *Fag Rag* (3, Summer 1972), 5.

⁵⁸ Charley Shively, 'SEQUINS & SWITCHBLADES: In Extremis Exegesis: A reading of John Wieners' *Selected Poems: 1958-1984*', *Fag Rag* (44, 1987), 28-33, quote from 30.

merchandise of both newspapers and Good Gay Poets.⁵⁹ Discussing the fire in her memoir, *Gay Community News* editor Amy Hoffman writes that “the situation was so scary – someone, somewhere, hating us enough to threaten not only our project but our lives” (2017: 155). Hoffman emphasises the emotional toll of the fire and the work that this led to, such that after the fire the papers set up “a round-the-clock vigil over what was left of the building” (155). The fire destroyed the Good Gay Poets’ stock, including the negatives for and remaining 750 copies of *Behind the State Capitol*, putting the book out of print; although Shively describes the fire as “the definitive exegesis of *Behind the State Capitol*”, in that it “revealed the void, the ashes, the destruction, the devastation. John Wieners had lived it first in his mind, in his poems, in his body”.⁶⁰

3.6 Poetry, cocksucking and revolution behind the state capitol

This chapter has conceptualised and argued that the work of John Wieners as part of the Gay Liberation movement and the work of the *Fag Rag* collective can be conceived of as a form of queer labour, work that materialised a Gay Liberation newspaper and poetry as a form of queer world-making. To conclude, I turn to Wieners’ poetic production in the context of *Fag Rag*’s political aesthetics and the queer labour of the Good Gay Poets collective. *Fag Rag* regularly published work by gay poets, including by the Good Gay Poets collective, often giving them pride of place. For instance, the *Fag Rag*/*Gay Sunshine* Stonewall 5th Anniversary Issue, which included poems by Allen

⁵⁹ Video footage of the fire has been posted online – Fourduce1, ‘Bromfield St. Boston MA 6 alarm fire 7/7/1982 05:30 hrs’, Youtube. Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFq3PfosM5c> (accessed 24 January 2018).

⁶⁰ Shively, ‘SEQUINS & SWITCHBLADES’, 32, 33; Raymond Foye to John Martin, 10th October 1984, Series 2, 1:44, John Wieners Papers. Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries. Wieners’ poem ‘September Eleventh’ discusses the fire, with the title suggesting it was written in 1982 (2015: 178).

Ginsberg, Jonathan Williams, Anne Waldman and graphics by Joe Brainard, prints Wieners' 'Gusta With Madame Simone de Beauvoir' on page 2.⁶¹ Naming Wieners 'Chair of Speculative History',⁶² *Fag Rag* published various works by: gay/Boston poems such as 'Gardenias', 'Broken-hearted Memories', 'Dormant Lamont' and 'The Gay World has Changed' (alongside a sketch of Wieners sleeping by Robert LaVigne); a play 'Harlem Bodyguard' and other experimental prose texts that shift between high society type columns, memoirs, book reviews, and reflections on the changes in gay life and politics in Boston.⁶³

Sort of Greek canapes color my memories.
Am I dead or alive? A feeling of embalming
fluid, unfair from this governmental restric-
tive use of private human beings threatens
my future, including grand larcening my
mother's past.

...in Fairy Temple
company, Mr. Rufus Stephen Jones shot
James Schuyler, forgetting my prepositions
from class as witchcraft, in the building!
here on Joy Street; Louis Bromfield's Joy
Street. Just think of it, behind the State
House, Sargeant's privy, said at the Napo-
lean, without the ball and chain, come over
and call on me anytime, I brought my bed-
room down, if you can make the bail.⁶⁴

Printed alongside a portrait of Jacqueline Kennedy, 'Quart' opens with the juxtaposition of food and memory felt through a body that is unsure of its

⁶¹ *Fag Rag/Gay Sunshine* Stonewall 5th Anniversary Issue (Summer 1974) – the poem is here titled 'imaginary interview' (between Greta Garbo and de Beauvoir), with the subtitle "in the style of beckett malanga, an a.k.g.b....."

⁶² This is somewhat comical. *Fag Rag* (11, Winter 1974), 10.

⁶³ The poems listed appear in *Fag Rag* (4, January 1973), 11. 'Harlem Bodyguard' appears in *Fag Rag* (13, Summer 1975). Prose texts include '1972-73' – which discusses contemporary gay life in Boston and appears framed by graphic illustrations of penises in *Fag Rag* (5, Summer 1973), 13; 'Gay American's Day in Rose Kennedy's Estate', *Fag Rag* (6, Fall 1973), 10, 28-29; 'A Comparative Study of *Studies for an Actress and Other Poems* [Jean Garrigue (1973) Indiana: Macmillan]; 'Quart', *Fag Rag* (7&8, Winter-Spring 1974), 10; 'Women's Newspapers; Homophile Bulletins; and The Underground', *Fag Rag* (10, Fall 1974), 22-23; 'Conjugal Contraries', *Fag Rag* (11, Winter 1974), 11. For some of this work, see Wieners, John (1987) *Quart, and Conjugal Contraries* (Madras: Hanuman Books).

⁶⁴ 'Quart', *Fag Rag* (7&8, Winter-Spring 1974), 10. This text is cited as it appears on the page.

status in life. Such feeling is “unfair”, emanating from the Massachusetts Government’s limits and placed on incarcerated and psychiatrised persons, juridical, social and sexual – as the text continues, “This is a cheated poet. A *chastised citizen* of The United States, a person illegally imprisoned over two years in the state of Massachusetts by Federal inmates from Hospitals for the Criminally Insane throughout the commonwealth” (emphasis added). This unfairness is also felt as a threat on both the poet’s future and the felonious theft (grand larceny) of his “mother’s past” – denoted through the present tense, transmuted verb “larcerning”. The text quickly runs into a micro-drama murder scene in the “Fairy Temple” of Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice*⁶⁵ among the company of gay poets, where Stephen Jonas shoots James Schuyler; followed by a clause in which “prepositions” slip Wieners’ memory before the word is itself connected to their site or status from which one learns learning (“prepositions *from* class”), forgotten as if through a spell. The build-up of clauses shift the scene to Joy Street, apparently that of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Louis Bromfield; however, it is distinctly the Joy Street inhabited by Wieners, ulterior to the ‘Straight House’ and as discussed in Boston’s gay bars, in this case bars for older men such as The Napoleon Club.⁶⁶ The queer references may be more or less common to *Fag Rag*’s readership, but the suggestive camp closing the paragraph solicits its reader to join the poet, in the bedroom or bathroom, provided they’ve the means to liberate him. The poem goes on to address: art and psychology; various celebrities (including Cary Grant, Bugsy Siegal and Baroness Maria von Trapp); Wieners’ memories of the

⁶⁵ *Death in Venice* (Trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter.) (1955), Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

⁶⁶ In 1974, the year this poem was published, The Napoleon Club won *Boston* magazine’s award for ‘Best Gay Bar, Older People’. The magazine described the Bay Village bar as “both the best and the worst. Known as the Wrinkle Room, Nappy’s or the Geriatrics Institute, the Napoleon Club goes back decades—it’s rumored JFK frequented it when he was at Harvard”. See <http://www.bestofboston.com/winner/best-gay-bar-older-people/the-napoleon-club-1974/> (accessed 30th November 2015).

assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald (referencing various people who may or may not have been involved in the JFK assassination, such as New Hampshire's then Republican Governor Meldrim Thompson, who is implicated through playing on names); makes references to various hospitals within which Wieners was incarcerated, and political unrest of the 1960s; references poets including Stan Persky, Herbert Huncke, Janine Pommy Vega, and furthermore recalls a romantic scene in the first person, possibly *as* Joan Crawford, with Charles Olson; and cites memories of the car crash at Black Mountain college that Wieners, his boyfriend Dana and Michael Rumaker witnessed the wreckage of in 1955, as addressed in Wieners' poem "'You Can't Kill These Machines'".⁶⁷ The poem draws to a close with a murder scene in which the poem's speaker (at this point) runs into the street in a blood-stained dress and wig, before suggesting she may be socialite Gregg Sherwood, followed by a brief reference to Wieners' vision of the Virgin Mary, and ends by denouncing 'priggish' political and royal elites who pollute Americans with their fraudulent morals. The text is signed "Joe DiMaggio's Last Wife" – i.e. Marilyn Monroe. Wieners' poetics here shift across temporalities of memory, culture, politics and sexuality, all key sites of struggle for the poet across the '60s and '70s; moving between persona, anger, trauma, honesty and sexual desire pile up through a multiplicity of feminine voices in the text's clauses – in a form of highly politicised, avant-garde camp that would speak hilarious volumes to *Fag Rag's* readers.

⁶⁷ A version of "'You Can't Kill These Machines'" appears in *The Floating Bear* (Issue 10, 1961); see also John Wieners, Seth Stewart (Ed.), 'Letters, Poems, to Michael Rumaker, 1955-58', *The Battersea Review*, Online at thebatterseareview.com/critical-prose/218-letters-with-poems-to-michael-rumaker-1955-58 (accessed 24 January 2018).

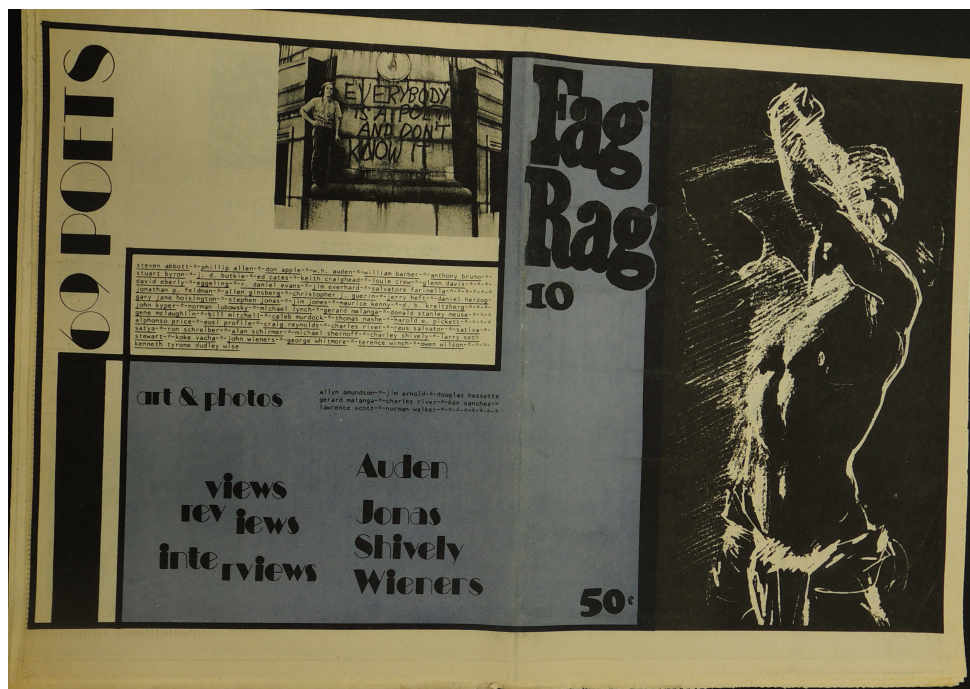


Figure 4: Cover and reverse of *Fag Rag* (10, Fall 1974), '69 Poets' issue.

As a key outlet for experimental and erotic poetry, *Fag Rag* also addressed the politics of poetry and position of poets in the liberation movement. In 'Poetry, Cocksucking and Revolution' – the editorial to the '69 Poets' issue of *Fag Rag* – Shively writes that despite the number of "faggot poets" across history and nations, and the number involved in the movement,

poetry has been the poor country cousin in the gay liberation movement no less than in the movement to conquer space. Even among our own we live unwelcome.⁶⁸

Shively also points towards the importance of challenging the politics that emerge in gay male writing – for instance challenging male supremacy in writing, and furthermore theorising the position of out "faggot poets" in relation to what Shively describes as the "imperialist industry" of the

⁶⁸ Shively, Charley, 'Poetry, Cocksucking and Revolution', *Fag Rag* 10 (Fall 1974), 3-5, quote on 3. Shively continues "nonetheless," following this with a stanza from Wiener's 'A poem for cocksuckers'. Shively appears to suggest that poetry has been the poor cousin within American literature as part of the American colonial project.

competitive poetry world and its institutions, where gay poetry is not considered 'serious' and queer poets only retain their position if their sexuality remains discreet. Indeed John Martin from Black Sparrow Press' dismissal of Wieners' titles for his *Selected Poems, 1958-1984*, ten years later, is exemplary of this. Claiming that society positions the poet as an individual and irrelevant, Shively argues that the grading systems of literary criticism must be done away with; that the faggot poet must tear down the literary establishment; and that "EVERYONE MUST SPEAK; EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION".⁶⁹ While a single newspaper alone is unable to fully democratise poetic production and the circulation of work, the labour of creating space for marginalised writers (with varying degrees of public prominence) was a significant part of the work of *Fag Rag* and Good Gay Poets collectives. Between Spring 1973 and Spring 1975 the Good Gay Poets organised readings with Wieners, William Burroughs, John Giorno, Gerard Malanga, Paul Mariah, Jonathan Williams, and Sylvia Sidney among other gay and lesbian poets, and a tribute reading to Boston homophile/gay activist Prescott Townsend (see Figure 4).⁷⁰ As Amy Hoffman recalls of Boston's lesbian community at the time, "concerts and poetry readings could be organized by ad hoc, task-oriented committees, and the events themselves were usually fun, illuminating, and full of opportunities for flirtation" (Hoffman 2014: 139). While occupying a diminished place in the wider movement, for the *Fag Rag* collective poetry was important for configuring, challenging and expressing the joys and ambivalences of the world of Gay Liberation; and an inextricable part of the world produced in print and through gay cultural spaces, enabling the circulation of gay desire. Furthermore, producing, publishing and publically

⁶⁹ *ibid*, 3-5, quote on 5.

⁷⁰ *Fag Rag* (No. 12, Spring 1975), 14; Shively (2012).

performing poetry were important forms of collectivised labour, through which could be waged an anti-establishment politics for social transformation (as we have seen in the case of Boston's 1972 Gay March).

From this context emerged *Behind the State Capitol*, published by the Good Gay Poets collective. This context has been unacknowledged and fundamentally misunderstood by some of Wiener's critics. For instance, in the two and half pages dedicated to describing the appearance and materiality of the book, John Wilkinson writes that it gives "overall an impression of the most comprehensive disorder and complete lack of reverence for the text. Indeed the effect is reminiscent of the home publishing and websites of conspiracy theories for whom the urgency of communicating the threat Prince Philip poses to civilisation outweighs any aesthetic concerns". Wilkinson concludes "Inconsistency appears to be a principle" (2007: 234-236). While the infamous string of offensive phrases Prince Philip has uttered towards people from a multiplicity of countries, minorities and ethnic backgrounds might be reflective of the poetics aligned to the British establishment and aristocracy dating back to the Renaissance, Wilkinson's negative description of the book demonstrates the challenge to normative values by *Fag Rag*'s and the Good Gay Poets collective's radical Gay poetics. Wilkinson describes the "reproductive quality" of the book as "of an indifferent photocopy", with the "[a]uthor's name and book title appear[ing] in a Broadway stencil typeface on the cover, in lipstick pink, and set with a notable lack of visual taste and technical competence" (2007: 234). However, Shively recollects that the book was typeset on a Compugraphic machine shared by various liberation groups, which was both "more expensive and more complicated" than the IBM Composer on which *Fag Rag* was produced, and furthermore "the entire text [of *Behind the State Capital*] faded

and had to be reset (because the developer had not been properly changed)” (2012). Furthermore, the book was typeset collectively by members of the Good Gay Poets collective, including Shively, Dave Stryker, Rich Kinman and John Mitzel (Wieners 2015: 185). While the collectively-used equipment led to additionally challenging work for the book’s publishers, it was produced on equipment that directly facilitated the spreading of the politics and consciousness of various liberation movements, through an organic division of queer labour created by Gay Liberation. The author’s name and book title in ‘lipstick pink’, as appear on the cover, denote a gay, high femme aesthetic that references the queer labour behind the production of both the book as material object and its content. Given that Wilkinson can only recognise the Good Gay Poets’ logo as “a curious splotch” (2007: 234-5), it is unsurprising that his reading fails to recognise radical gay and Mad poetics and content of the book as a camp commodity – a political product of transformative, collectivised queer labour. Indeed, *Fag Rag* even offered *Behind the State Capitol* to its readers for \$1 with a 10-issue subscription to the paper.⁷¹ As a camp commodity, these aesthetics speak to a queerness that knowing readers would observe and read; and furthermore, after the destruction of the remaining copies of *Behind the State Capitol*, the book as commodity has become rare and sought after, a camp object of inflated value, now often retailing for over \$125 on online second-hand bookstores.

Behind the State Capitol ought to be understood as Wieners’ attempt to aesthetically express and realise a liberated Gay and psychiatric survivor consciousness – including the political potential and historical ambivalence of such struggles and the suffering that necessitates them. This includes

⁷¹ *Fag Rag* (20, Summer 1977).

challenging the agents of repression that silence such voices – including auditory hallucinations that are labelled as psychotic – be they psychiatrists or the literary establishment. The book's title itself denotes the gay world of the north side of Boston's Beacon Hill, geographically situated 'behind' Massachusetts' State House – the legislative heart of straight politics and restraint.⁷² It is a crucial volume of poetry and prose on class and social transformation ('After Dinner on Pinckney Street'), radical gay sexuality and the ambivalences of gay life ('A Popular Belief as Practiced: Indiscriminate Promiscuity', 'By the Bars'), gender transgression ('The Rich and The Super Rich'), Wieners' life among poets and personal experiences with drugs ('Letters'), American politics, psychiatric survivor consciousness ('Children of the Working Class'), emotional nostalgia and avant-garde camp drama ('Vera Lynn') – often shifting between these aspects in one text or one paragraph. The book also contains "over forty collages", which as Jim Dunn writes, "isolate, layer and demonstrate Wieners obsession with his own memories and personal history commingled with movie stars, socialites, and random ephemera he includes in his creative process" (Dunn 2017: 47). It stands as a key product of the collective labour and politics of Boston's Gay Liberation movement, remaining in conversation with Boston's liberation movements, all the while maintaining Wieners' religious commitment to his art.

⁷² The scene of gay and lesbian politics on Beacon Hill, and in particular on Wieners' Joy Street, is captured by Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, describing an activist meeting on Joy Street in June 1972 (1999: 125-127)

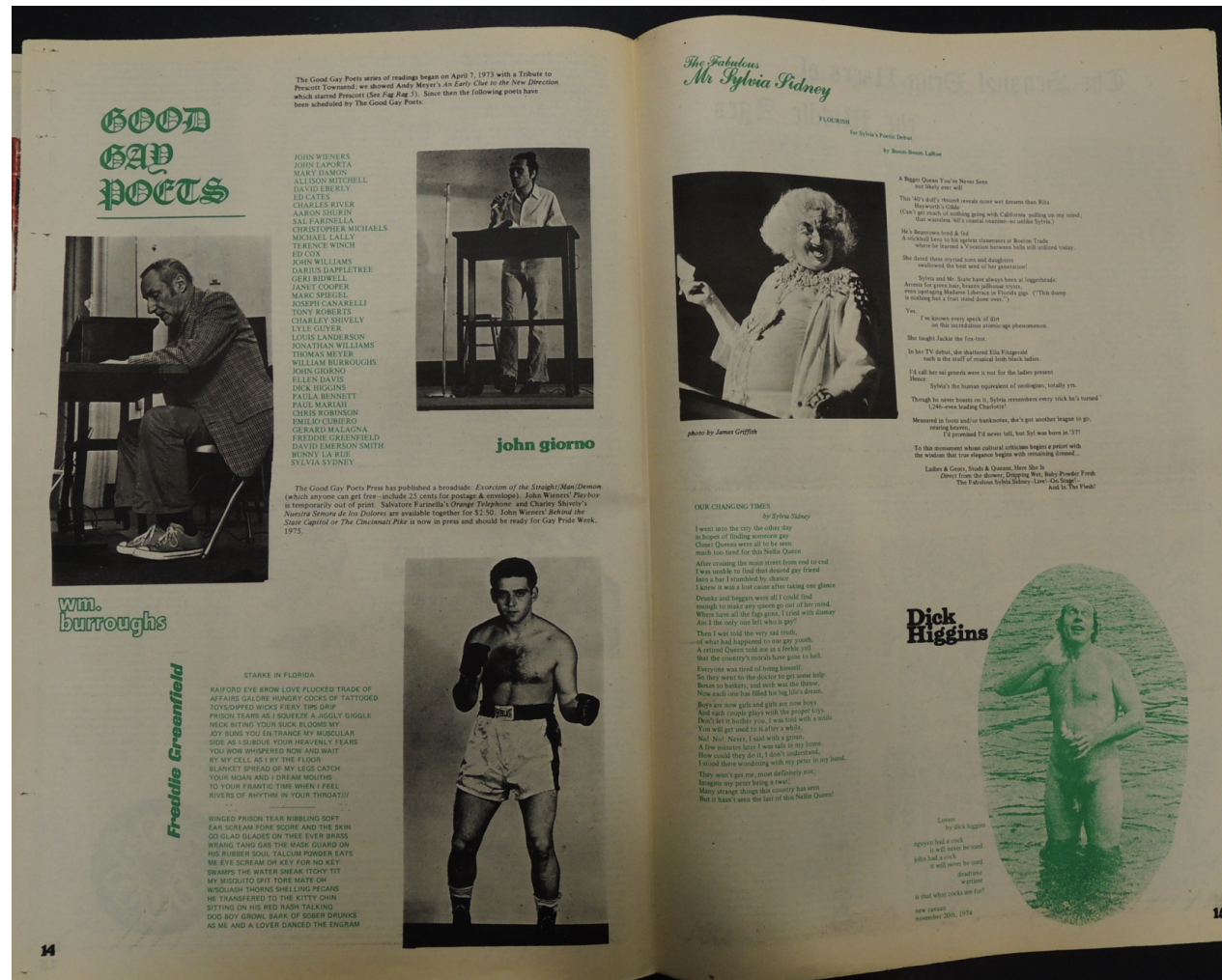


Figure 5 – *Fag Rag* (No. 12, Spring 1975), 14-15. Double page spread on the Good Gay Poets collective, including a list of readers appearing at the collective's reading series since April 1973, and details of the collective's publications (noting Wiener's *Behind the State Capitol* should be out by Gay Pride week). The spread includes poems by and photographs of Sylvia Sidney, Freddie Greenfield and Dick Higgins, and photographs of William Burroughs and John Giorno.

Chapter 4: The Survival of John Wieners: psychiatric incarceration, Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation and poetics

"In the brutal outrage of the late 1950's, when one could pick up a Government bulletin in the home manufacture of a bomb shelter at the post office, Mr. Wieners' painful survival in words became our own: "At last. I come to the last defense." There was nothing else to shelter or protect him. Time and again during the 60's, one wondered, worried, whether he could make it."

– Robert Creeley (in Wieners 1988: 11)

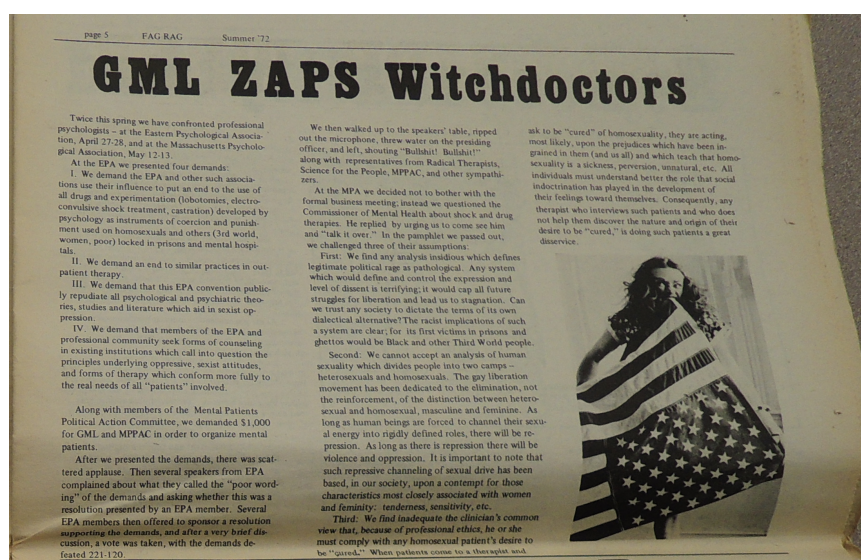


Figure 6 - 'GML ZAPS Witchdoctors', *Fag Rag* (No. 3, Summer '72)

4.1 "inhabit your bailiwick to breakneck resistance": Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation "Zaps Witchdoctors" in Boston, Spring 1972¹

Next to a photograph of a drag queen eating an upside-down American Flag, an article in *Fag Rag* (figure 6) recounts two zaps of the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA) and the Massachusetts Psychological Association by Boston's Gay Male Liberation (GML) and New York's Mental Patients Political Action Committee (MPPAC) undertaken in April and May 1972.

¹ 'Plymouth: A Test on Corpses', Wieners 1986: 236; 'GML ZAPS Witchdoctors', *Fag Rag* (3, Summer 1972), 5.

At the EPA we presented four demands:

I. We demand the EPA and other such associations use their influence to put an end to the use of all drugs and experimentation (lobotomies, electro-convulsive shock treatment, castration) developed by psychology as instruments of coercion and punishment used on homosexuals and others (3rd world, women, poor) locked in prisons and mental hospitals.

II. We demand an end to similar practices in outpatient therapy.

III. We demand that this EPA convention publically repudiate all psychological and psychiatric theories, studies and literature which aid in sexist oppression.

IV. We demand that members of the EPA and professional community seek forms of counselling in existing institutions which call into question the principles underlying oppressive, sexist attitudes, and forms of therapy which conform more fully to the real needs of all “patients” involved.²

GML and MPPAC supplemented these with a demand requesting \$1,000 for the groups “in order to organize mental patients”. The demands – taken to a vote and “defeated 221-120” – and the zaps highlight the intersectional work undertaken by members of the Gay Liberation and Mental Patients’ Liberation movements, the latter of which was in some of its earliest incarnations in the early 1970s³ – challenging psychiatry alongside other violent institutions of conservative, racist, sexist, homophobic and ableist white America (including the military, the Government, prisons, etc). Building upon the anti-psychiatry movement of the 1960s, these movements here demanded an end to the violence enacted within psychiatric institutions on patients, including on individuals pathologised for sexual and gender deviance from the norms of conservative, white America, and/or for being poor and/or people of colour.

² ‘GML ZAPS Witchdoctors’, *Fag Rag* (3, Summer 1972), 5.

³ The first formal groups of Mental Patients Liberation in the USA included the Insane Liberation Front in Portland, Oregon (1970), the Mental Patient’s Liberation Front in Boston (1971) and the Mental Patient’s Liberation Project in New York (Staub 2011). Out of the latter grew the “more radical” Mental Patient’s Political Action Committee (Starkman 2013: 33). *Phoenix Rising* (Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1980) lists the MPPAC’s address as c/o Piturro, 357 W. 259th St., Bronx, NY (Online via the Psychiatric Survivor Archives of Toronto <http://www.psychiatricurvivorarchives.com/phoenix.html>, accessed 8th January 2018).

As Abram Lewis argues in his important contributions to the shared history of both movements, these actions demonstrate their tendency to challenge the authority of psychiatry while affirming Madness as a “resource for critique and action” by deploying “tactics that were intensely irrational, disorganizing, and incoherent” (2016: 87). This tendency flew in the face of reformist efforts by gay activists who campaigned to psychiatrists for them to depathologise homosexuality by removing it as a disorder from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), which occurred in 1973-74. Lewis argues that the “gay reformers” of the latter type “were more likely to seek psychiatric sanction by affirming and appealing to the discipline’s scientific integrity” (85). In comparison, Lewis briefly discusses the Boston actions – highlighting the anti-racist and anti-sexist politics of solidarity at the heart of the actions that “indict[ed] the conference presenters’ racism before even introducing gay political grievances”. He emphasises that “[t]heir demands – offered with the caveat that anything short of immediately disbanding the profession amounted to compromise – likewise displaced gay identity politics” (102).⁴

The two Boston actions are contemporaneous to the incarceration of the Gay/bisexual, working class Boston poet John Wieners in Taunton State Hospital, Massachusetts – the last of five institutionalisations faced by Wieners between 1960 and 1972.⁵ As his writing and archive show, Wieners experienced perilous violence at the hands of institutional psychiatry while incarcerated in

⁴ Lewis makes an important argument that “Rather than ‘depathologizing’ sexuality, as the revision is often memorialised today, the campaign [led by reformist gay activists] might instead be read as facilitating a more nuanced psychiatrization of sexual and gender difference” (2016: 98).

⁵ In his first *Gay Sunshine* interview, Wieners states that he has “been in several state hospitals: Medfield State (January – July, 1960) in Mass.; Metropolitan State (March – August, 1961) in Mass.; Central Islip State Hospital (June – Sept., 1969) on Long Island; and Taunton State (April Fool’s Day – May 31st, 1972) in Mass. I’ve only been in a private sanatorium for a couple of months, and I have not recollection of it” – due to electric shock ‘treatment’ (Leyland 1982: 261). Originally published in *Gay Sunshine* 17 (March/April 1973). A slightly edited down version appears in *Selected Poems 1958-1984* (Wieners 1986: 293-308).

hospitals, including a loss of freedom, invasive examinations, forced medication and sedation, and electroshock 'treatment'. Poems such as 'The Acts of Youth' (Wieners 2015: 56-57), dated 5th December 1961,⁶ emerge from the bleakest depths of such violence, contemplating (and punning upon) "the future without hope / or buoy":

And with great fear I inhabit the middle of the night
What wrecks of the mind await me, what drugs
to dull the senses, what little I have left,
what more can be taken away?

The extent of the potential social destruction facing the poet classified as homosexual has been played down in critical work on Wieners – indeed, as this chapter will argue, critical work on Wieners has naturalised the violence of psychiatry. For instance, in reading these lines, John Wilkinson claims that Wieners' "stance is *passive*" compared to the poem's "highly controlled" lines that "seek resolution". Comparing this work to Anne Sexton's verse of "mental illness", Wilkinson suggests Wieners' "predicaments are represented as archetypal, *rather than* ascribed to damage incurred at the hands of malignly-motivated family members and psychiatrists" (2007: 218, emphasis added). As a "marked man" under the nation's law due to his homosexuality and his experiences as a mental patient, Wieners intimately understands that psychiatry stands as a force capable of turning him into "a total wreck", negating "the senses" that this verse depends on and destroying the poet's memory through means such as Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT). Wieners writes, "Is my mind being taken away from me. I have been over the abyss before. What / is that ringing in my ears that tells me / / all is nigh". The lack of questioning here and the simple statements indicate the poet's need to overcome the fear – indeed the

⁶ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 29 January 1962, Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

“ringing in [his] ears” recalls the sound of electricity. The gay, ex-patient poet understands that “in this country it is terror”, the “poverty” that “awaits” is both material and psychological for those the nation marks out for destruction; hence Wieners’ concerns are ‘archetypal’ only through a direct relation to the institutions that deliver such violence to particular, “marked” persons. As this chapter will demonstrate, amid the perilous violence of psychiatry and its long-term material impact, poetry becomes a source of salvation, a means of psychic survival and a vehicle of politicised thought for Wieners, in the knowledge that this may be “the formula all great art is made of. // Pain and suffering.”

During his incarceration in Taunton State in 1972, Wieners penned his May Day litany ‘Children of the Working Class’ (2015a: 138-139) and around the period of his incarceration and release the poet became actively involved in Boston’s Gay Liberation and Mental Patients’ Liberation movements. Wieners’ involvement with the *Fag Rag* collective, Good Gay Poets and mental patients’ groups – which was informed and sometimes obstructed by his psychiatric incarceration – was transformational and redemptive for his political consciousness and praxis and for his writing.⁷ Across the 60s and into the 70s, his poetics and politics underwent significant development, intimately connecting his consciousness of Madness and experience of psychiatric incarceration to gay life, prior to and since the birth of gay liberation. The poet’s writing and archive from the period are a testament to the abuse he faced at the hands of institutional psychiatry; and the potential of political transformation through his involvement with various groups within the Gay and Mental Patients’ Liberation movements and through his friendship with activists such

⁷ Describing the formation of the Good Gay Poets collective in Winter 1971 with Aaron Shurin, Charley Shively names the group as “David Eberly, Ron Schrieber, Charles River, John LaPorta, myself and on occasion John Wieners (sometime incarcerated in Taunton State Hospital)” (‘Poetry Cocksucking and Revolution’, *Fag Rag* 10, Fall 1974, 3-5, quote on 3).

as Charley Shively. This chapter addresses key moments within Wieners' poetry, poetics and his archive from across this period – specifically 1960-61 and 1972-73 – where his devastating experiences of psychiatric incarceration put the survival of both lyric poetry and the poet into question, and which later run through the tensions of a liberated political consciousness against psychiatry and heteronormative American society. As Maria Damon writes, in a chapter reading lyric by minoritised writers such as Wieners and Bob Kaufman as a form of ethnography, “the disintegration of their psyches in a sense attested to their attempt to find a new, truer way to witness, to embody and inhabit language in (post-) modernity” (2011: 176). Furthermore, I argue that many literary critics working on Wieners – with the exception of Damon, who is one of the only established critics attuned to Wieners' involvement in Mental Patients' Liberation in particular⁸ – have failed to address both the relevance of the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation movements to Wieners' poetics and the violence the poet faced from institutional psychiatry.

After outlining the Mad Studies approach of my work, this chapter will interrogate the sanism, homophobia and sexism in contemporary literary critical readings of Wieners. I will then undertake a reparative reading (Sedgwick 2002) of Wieners' archive from 1960-61, primarily addressing letters between the poet and his close friend and mentor Charles Olson, and unpublished poems and poems from his journals, which provide intimate details of the poet's incarceration and the violence he faced. Indeed Wieners understood such violence as a threat to his poetics itself – the sentiments articulated in this harrowing work show the importance of writing as a primary means of survival. Furthermore, psychiatric incarceration seems to be directly

⁸ Personal communication, 8th August 2014.

responsible for the loss of Wieners' 1960 Journal titled 'THE PLANETS', later retitled 'Jewels', which disappeared during his hospitalisation at Medfield State Hospital in 1960 and disappeared from the poet's memory completely after he received electroshock 'treatments' (Stewart 2014: 260, ftnt. 10). The chapter historicises the violence of psychiatry and its targeting in particular of gay men and gender non-conforming people, paying attention to critiques from key intellectuals of the period and from the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation movements, of psychiatry and the material problems created by psychiatric incarceration. The chapter closes by situating Wieners' politicisation amid these movements and his contribution to Mental Patients' Liberation.

4.2 Maddening the Stakes: Mad Studies

The adoption of a Mad Studies approach has important implications for queer Marxism, as it raises the question of how psychiatrised people and their bodies are devalued, disqualified from, and used for cheap labour and as raw material within neoliberal capitalist society;⁹ and how deviant sexualities, gender expressions and embodiment, and the persons expressing them, are pathologised, experientially and epistemologically disqualified, and are subjected to forms of violence and medical intervention without consent. Furthermore, we must question how such material, experiential and epistemological disqualifications are reproduced in critical theory and literary criticism. As we have seen the previous chapter, Gay Liberation media such as *Fag Rag* and *Good Gay Poets* explicitly challenged the heterosexism of the white American literary establishment, amid stakes that alongside their challenges to

⁹ For further discussion of the valuation of poor, queer and disabled bodies within capitalist society, see Berlant (2011: 95-119).

structure of white American society, led to the firebombing of their offices and the destruction of their stock. While the fire and the destruction of half of the copies produced of Wiener's *Behind the State Capitol* have led to it becoming a highly valued collectors item in the twenty-first century, it could be argued that Wiener's (lack of) literary recognition in his lifetime – perhaps only coming into anything near serious recognition in 2015, fourteen years after his death – is exemplary of the legacy of the devaluation of work by poor LGBTQ persons and Mad people/psychiatric survivors. In addition, we must question how literary criticism, alongside its naturalisation of the violence of psychiatry, tends to devalue work that is seen, read or labelled as 'Mad'. This positive valorisation of such work, methods and ideas, is key part of Mad Studies.

Richard Ingram describes Mad Studies as "*in/discipline*" – both "a discipline and an indiscipline" which affirms that there is both "method" in "madness" and a "madness in our method" that must be retained (2016: 13). Introducing Mad Studies, LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume write:

Across a range of institutional and cultural contexts, activists, psychiatric survivors, academics, journalists, and dissenting practitioners have been challenging the conventional biological paradigm of 'mental illness'; exposing the systemic and symbolic violence that lie at the core of the psychiatric system; constructing radically creative ways of thinking about matters of the mind; linking the struggle against biopsychiatry with other movements organized around gender, race, disability, social class, culture and generation; building critical community that now spans all the regions of [Canada]; and practising mental "difference" and recovery as liberating ways of expressing our humanity and engaging in political debate and practice (LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume 2013: 3).

Mad Studies has emerged from the social context of the Mad movement in Canada and the UK – including the Mental Patients' Liberation and/or the Consumer/Survivor/Ex-patient (c/s/x) movements and Mad Pride; from disability studies and the lineage of feminist and queer work on madness; and

through critically building upon the work of key scholars – who have critiqued the social and institutional functions of psychiatry including Michel Foucault, sociologist Erving Goffman,¹⁰ and anti-psychiatrists R.D. Laing and David Cooper.¹¹ Alongside the reclamation of the words ‘Mad’ and ‘Madness’ in a manner similar to the reclamation of queer – whereby Mad as the reclaimed term of those who have been psychiatrised or pathologised as ‘mentally ill’, is used to describe “a movement, an identity, a stance, an act of resistance, a theoretical approach, and a burgeoning field of study” (Poole and Ward 2013, quoted in LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume 2013: 10) – Mad Studies centres the lived experiences of psychiatrised people and the disqualifications of their knowledge and experience by psychiatry and the wider societies that legitimate its practice. Offering their complex and many stranded definition of Mad Studies, LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume highlight that “Mad Studies can be defined in general terms as a project of inquiry, knowledge production, and political action devoted to the critique and transcendence of psy-centred ways of thinking, behaving, relating and being” (13).

Thus Mad Studies, along with its lineage, continues to challenge the foundations of psychiatry and the influence of its episteme – from its inconsistent and often racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic and transphobic diagnostic and labelling practices; to its direct use as a form of social control, including but not limited to psychiatric (and other forms of) incarceration and

¹⁰ Heather Love has recently authored important reappraisals of Goffman and Deviance Studies as a discipline from a queer studies perspective – see ‘Doing Being Deviant: Deviance Studies, Description, and the Queer Ordinary’, Special issue “Queer Theory without Anti-Normativity,” ed. Robyn Wiegman and Elizabeth Wilson, *differences* 26.1 (2015): 74-95; and ‘Reading the Social: Erving Goffman and Sexuality Studies’. In *Theory Aside*, (2014) Jason Potts and Daniel Stout (eds). Durham and London: Duke University Press.

¹¹ For an introduction to the creative culture of Mad Pride, see Robert Dellar, Ted Curtis and Esther Leslie (eds) (2000) *Mad pride: a celebration of mad culture* (Hackney: Spare Change Books). LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume highlight Phyllis Chesler’s *Women and Madness* (1972) and Dorothy Smith and Sara David’s *Women Look at Psychiatry* (1975) as important feminist texts on Madness (2013: 6).

forced 'treatment', to its influence in sanist attitudes that are often pervasive through societies.¹² At the basis of this is a challenge to the 'medical model' of madness, which Michael Rembis, historicising the c/s/x movement's challenge to the model, describes as "the idea that madness is something that is experienced individually and internally, and is fixed, natural, timeless, neutral or value-free, and rooted in our biology (neurochemistry)" (2014: 141).

In addition, scholars working across critical sociology and the history of mental illness, such as Bruce Cohen, have highlighted the importance of contextualising the role of psychiatry and psychology "in relation to the fundamental conditions of economic exploitation under capitalism" (2016: 18). Cohen argues that psychiatry is "an inherently political institution" (18), and highlights that by focusing on individual problems and adjustment, over social problems and social transformation, mental healthcare systems "seek to normalise the fundamentally oppressive relations of capitalism", pathologising individuals and deeming them "in need of adjustment through 'treatment' options such as drugs, Electroconvulsive Therapy and therapy" (19). Mapping the contributions of Marxist scholars working on medicine and historicising the development of psychiatric power across different periods of capitalism, Cohen delineates how class struggle is reproduced within institutional healthcare systems, which themselves have "emerged out of the need for a healthier and more reliable industrial workforce" (2016: 32, citing Waitzkin 2000). He describes how hierarchies of authority and decision-making reproduce

¹² In *The Protest Psychosis*, Metzl argues that "To a remarkable extent, anxieties about racial difference shape diagnostic criteria, health-care politics, medical and popular attitudes about mentally ill persons, the structures of treatment facilities, and, ultimately, the conversations that take place there within" (2011: xi). Metzl historicizes the rise in diagnosis of schizophrenia in African American men throughout the 1960s and 1970s, when the diagnosis was previously associated with White women, emphasizing the use of the diagnosis to discredit the Black Power and Black Liberation movements of period. For an account of Western psychiatry's use as a tool of imperialism, see Fernando (2002), who argues that psychiatry and psychology have an ethnocentric and racist bias.

hierarchies of social class, and also highlights that the role healthcare systems play “as an institution of social control”, by “reinforc[ing] the dominant values and norms of capitalism through its surveillance and labelling practices”. Psychiatry attends to the needs of the market including through “the profiteering from individual treatments, the expansion of professional services,” and “the reinforcement of work and family regimes in the name of appropriate treatment outcomes” (32-33).

Furthermore, scholars have argued that following the movement for deinstitutionalisation in the USA – which Metzl describes as a “failed social experiment” that “combined economic considerations with reactions to appalling conditions in mental asylums to push for the liberation of persons warehoused in state psychiatric hospitals”, leading to the 1963 Community Mental Health Act and the transfer of Federal funding from institutions to non-residential community mental health centres (2011: 13) – Mad people today still face high rates of incarceration within the US prison system, often described as the ‘Prison Industrial Complex’ or ‘Prison/Institutional Industrial Complex’. Michael Rembis suggests that, as of 2006, the number of mad prisoners is close to “1.25 million, twice the number (in absolute terms) of mad citizens incarcerated in state hospitals during the peak years of institutionalization in the mid-1950s”; with an imprisonment rate that is 6.5 times higher for African American Men, and 2.5 times higher for Hispanic men than for White men, and “the imprisonment rate for African American women was almost double that of Hispanic women and three times the rate of white women” (144-145).¹³ In addition, Mad people face social disinvestment through the continued

¹³ Working from US Government and NGO statistics, Rembis writes that this number includes all “individuals living with ‘mental health problems’; the 1999 Department of Justice statistics of incarcerated people with “serious mental health problems” number 283,000 in prisons and 70,000 in public psychiatric hospitals (2014: 145).

underfunding of 'community care', and it is within this context that the Mental Patients Liberation and c/s/x movements propose and have created 'patient controlled alternatives' to state and private institutional care (Chamberlin 1978). Mad, c/s/x and anti-psychiatry activists have also highlighted the profit-making aspects of the pharmaceutical companies, who have significantly profited through a widespread use of antipsychotic/neuroleptic drugs on patients since the 1950s, and which activists argue have been prescribed and used often without a patient's consent (or without considering the terms of their consent).¹⁴

Wieners' writing from the early 60s to the early 70s intimately understands, expresses and exposes the violence faced by those incarcerated by the power of psychiatry. This work is a queer, Mad poetics that survives facing extinction from psychiatric violence, developing and espousing a radical, politicised consciousness against it. Furthermore, the poet's experimentation of the mid 70s, as witnessed in *Behind the State Capitol*, is exemplary of a radical creativity affirming his Madness. To read Wieners through a Mad, reparative reading, is to affirm what psychiatry and homophobic white America may wish to have slayed. This chapter attempts to listen carefully to the affects and desires for transformation that ushered both the Gay and Mental Patients' Liberation movements into being, alongside nuances of intersecting history, politics, aesthetics and emotion that have been marginalised since their moment of

¹⁴ On the subject of profits from antipsychotic drugs, see Robert Whitaker (2010) *Anatomy of an epidemic: magic bullets, psychiatric drugs, and the astonishing rise of mental illness in America*, New York: Crown Publishers; and for a anti-psychiatry perspective on this latter argument, see Bonnie Burstow (2015) *Psychiatry and the business of madness: an ethical and epistemological accounting*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

existence.¹⁵ Indeed, by the Mad, reparative reading of the poet, one might argue that one does not sanely read John Wieners.

4.3 "... and a paper from the state saying I am 'a mentally ill person'":¹⁶ naturalising psychiatric violence in contemporary readings of Wieners

A Mad Studies approach has significant implications for literary critical work, particularly in reading the writing of psychiatrised subjects and survivors, ex-patients and service users. In undertaking a Mad, reparative reading of Wieners, we must account for the profound affect of psychiatrisation on the poet's life and oeuvre; the intimate connection between the poet's psychiatrisation and his homosexuality and bisexuality, his sexual and gender deviance; and the impact of his status as an ex-patient on his life, including its material impact. Indeed, Wieners' poetry from the 70s is littered with references to his psychiatrisation *and* his poverty. "A quart of champagne, one pill too many / and a paper from the state saying I am 'a mentally ill person' / Was it the pills or champagne no", he writes ironically, dispossessed of his glamour in the opening stanza of 'Does His Voice Sound An Echo In Your Heart' (1985: 195). The poem is a clear, effacing mediation questioning the goodness of God through the loneliness and paranoia that comes with being a gay psychiatric survivor, which steadily faces a future of little means, where "tomorrow / the pills will be digested, champagne evaporated / and only paper left". Furthermore, Wieners' writing from this period (although not solely from this

¹⁵ As Eve Sedgwick writes, "The desire of a reparative impulse... is additive and accretive. Its fear, a realistic one, is that the culture surrounding it is inadequate or inimical to its nurture; it wants to assemble and confer plenitude on an object that will then have resources to offer an inchoate self" (2002: 149).

¹⁶ Wieners, 'Does His Voice Sound An Echo In Your Heart' (1985: 195).

period) has at its heart a troubled-yet-liberatory Gay, Mad poetics, pushing creative expression into radically new forms. Wieners' 1975 *Behind the State Capitol; or Cincinnati Pike*, produced and published in the context of Boston's Gay Liberation movement by Good Gay Poets, lies at the heart of this. Wieners' work from this period has been at best side-lined, at worst defamed by contemporary literary critics, especially when compared to his 'high lyric' work addressing queer love and loss (such as the work of *Nerves*).¹⁷ As an exercise in critical pedagogy (LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume 2013: 14), we must consider how a Mad Studies approach to reading literature can transform the knowledge this work produces; and question and challenge how literary criticism has naturalised the institutional power of psychiatry, including its diagnoses and its violence.

Significant critical work on Wieners has been guilty of such naturalization.¹⁸ In his essay 'Too-Close Reading: Poetry and Schizophrenia' (Wilkinson 2007: 157-

¹⁷ For example, see Wilkinson (2007: 157-167), where in comparing Wieners' poetry from the mid-1970s to 'Billie' of *Nerves*, he asks "[a]re these to be regarded as the sad relicts of the decades of previous work, behavioural automatism (sic) carrying away evacuated pathological matter in neat parcels?" (161). I address this essay below.

¹⁸ See also Brady (2007). In citing letters between Wieners, Philip Whalen and Charles Olson, concerning Wieners' commitment to Medfield State Hospital, Brady quickly focuses the discussion on Wieners' relationship with Olson (26-27). Later in the essay and during a psychoanalytic discussion of familial relations, she briefly discusses Wieners' essay 'The Problem of Madness', repeatedly describing his thoughts on the subject of madness – such as the labelling of persons as "'mad' by society, at the bidding of an opposite-counteracted family" (Wieners, 37) – as "complain[t]s" (Brady, 48-49). Brady furthermore reads Wieners' essay within a narrative of "recovery", whereby the causes of distress and memory loss are collapsed into an amalgamation of "drugs, alcohol, medicine and electro shock therapy" (in this particular order), and the work in his *Journal A book of PROPHECIES* becomes "post-therapeutic work" (49-50). Brady's writing regarding Wieners' "mental illness" concludes with Wieners sharp comments around his father – who had been institutionalised in a hospital since Wieners' birth, and to whom Wieners had dedicated *Asylum Poems* – suggesting that "It is as if Wieners is trying to isolate the shameful aspects of his own life history by projecting them onto his father" (50). While there is much to be said regarding the complexity of Wieners' relationship to his father (which this psychoanalytic reading cannot articulate in a balanced manner), Brady refrains from critiquing the role and violence of Institutional Psychiatry and the role of Wieners' family in his institutionalisation. Furthermore, shame is invoked in the essay in a heterosexist manner that re-asserts the primacy of the family over and above the struggles of the queer, gender-deviant and psychiatrised poet (52-55). Page numbers refer to the version online at

167), John Wilkinson studies and compares the language of Wiener's mid-1960s and mid-1970s work for its "technical attributes of schizophrenic language (sic)" as described by clinical psychologist Louis A. Sass (159). While this language is seemingly characterised by "desocialization, atomization and impoverishment", the relationship between these 'characteristics' and their psychiatrisation, and the social role and historical impact of institutional psychiatry, especially on those it deems its patients, are severed. Compare, for instance, the process of 'disculturation' described by Erving Goffman in his landmark book *Asylums* as the psychiatric institution's process of "'untraining' which renders [the inmate] temporarily incapable of managing certain features of daily life on the outside [of the institution], if and when he gets back to it" (1961: 23).¹⁹ By deploying linguistic studies written by a clinical psychiatrist as a critical tool, Wilkinson valorises expert knowledge extracted through the pathologisation and disqualification of the knowledge of objectified patients.²⁰ Wilkinson repeatedly asks if the poetics characteristic of Wiener's *Behind the State Capitol* may be "merely pathological", before asserting that the "artistry" of this work entails too much "conscious control" of "the language of madness" to be considered "schizophrenic" or "schizophrenic products" (160-162). However despite this latter assertion and its creation of a dichotomy between 'artistic control' and seemingly uncontrollable 'schizophrenia', Wilkinson must further insist that

There is a *possible diagnostic explanation* (sic) for Wiener's manipulation of schizophrenic language and its alliance with camp,

https://www.academia.edu/271607/ Making_Use_of_the_Pain_the_John_Wieners_Archives (Accessed 10th January 2018).

¹⁹ Goffman is deploying a term used by Robert Sommer (1959) – see in particular 1961: 23-24.

²⁰ It ought to be noted that Wilkinson has a professional background in Mental Health services. Wilkinson trained as a psychiatric nurse and worked for over two decades in NHS mental health ('John Wilkinson' author page, Barque Press, online at <http://www.barquepress.com/authors.php?i=30> (accessed 21st November 2018)).

in the choice (sic) of a schizophrenic career (sic) by some severely hysterical individuals (sic), especially men (sic) (162, emphasis added).

Here the literary critic again asserts that psychiatry and its “diagnostic” criteria must be able to resolve the aforementioned dichotomy, where furthermore the poet has *pejoratively* tied his mad creativity to his sexuality. While, for Wieners, madness, creativity and sexuality cannot be separated from each other, it is the authority and epistemology of psychiatry, its diagnostic criteria, and the naturalisation of its historical violence in contemporary readings of literature that we must fundamentally question. The contemporaneous pathologisation of homosexuality as a ‘disease’, the violence that came with this pathology (varying in its gendered character), the political struggle (that is, forms of activist work) for depathologisation and abolition of psychiatry by gay reformers and liberationists, and feminist challenges to the highly gendered concept of hysteria, are here entirely erased from the perspective of the critic. Wilkinson further suggests that ‘schizophrenia’ itself can firstly be a “career”, secondly a career “choice”, thirdly a decision chosen by individuals who may be “severely hysterical” (again invoking the language of pathologisation and the power of psychiatry), that fourthly is commonly chosen by men. It must be noted that recently, and also historically, schizophrenia has been called into question as a suspect diagnostic label attached to a problematic disease model.²¹ Critical psychiatrists Moncrieff and Middleton argue that the label is neither “valid nor useful” and that it conceals the power of psychiatry to “control and manipulate” persons labelled schizophrenic (2015: 266-267).²² Wilkinson makes

²¹ It is worth noting that Wilkinson is *not* discussing radical reframings of Schizophrenia developed by Deleuze and Guatarri in *Capitalism or Schizophrenia*, or any contemporaneous schizo-culture in this particular essay.

²² Highlighting that in “100 years of research” psychiatry has failed to located any “defect” in the brain or the body specific to schizophrenia, the authors argue furthermore that “[t]he label ‘schizophrenia’ is not associated with a consistent pattern of deviant behaviour or outcomes” (2015: 265). This is not to

no mention of the social and material impact that such diagnosis may have on those labelled 'schizophrenic' or "severely hysterical", who are known to be ex-mental patients, the material disadvantages facing out gay men and lesbians in the period – particularly those who are or were ex-patients or faced psychiatrised – or the feminised character of the label of hysteria. There is also clearly no understanding of the intensive *lack* of choice faced by psychiatrised persons, particularly if incarcerated in a mental hospital. Goffman described mental hospitals as a form of 'total institution', where psychiatrists control the patient's daily activities, medication and length of stay in the hospital (as I discuss below). Wilkinson instead follows the above cited paragraph with a discussion of camp, before claiming that "[t]hose sophisticated writers who are romantically inclined towards madness (sic)", such as Wieners, are writing "within a *secure genre*, either flirting with what is no more likely to harm them than ecstasy or following a strictly literary programme with conscious design to 'subvert' the assumptions of ordinary speech or text" (162-163, emphasis added). He continues that such aesthetic "designs... tend to be more complicit with the culture (sic) with which they take adversarial issue than is apparent to their authors or their readership" (163). To suggest that such writing is "strictly literary" is to ignore its potential political intent or use against the cultures that such syntactic subversion may be aimed against – Wieners' writing from the mid-'70s and that published in *Fag Rag*, are exemplary in this. Furthermore, the security of the genre of 'literary subversion' of everyday speech or text is negated in reality by the violence securing of psychiatric institutions and the abuse delivered within their confines.

say that the persons experiencing the behavioural and speech difference associated with this label may not find them disturbing; but, as the authors argue, that the current concept of schizophrenia ought to be abandoned, and that "more generic term[s] such as 'madness' or 'psychosis'" might best describe such behaviour – without the connotations of a 'disease' and "which allow the unique nature of each individual's difficulties to be recognized" (267).

4.4 “And we read, grasp for the word / as a life-preserver”:²³ The survival of John Wieners

In a letter dated 12th February 1960, Wieners writes to Charles Olson addressing the predicament of his incarceration in Medfield State Hospital, Massachusetts, the first of five institutionalisations faced by Wieners between 1960 and 1972:

Dear Charles:

Third attempt at letters to you . My great dilemma here is how to have freedom. I am committed on 40 day papers per stretchers and straps of father. That time will be up at the end of next week. And if I am not released I know there will be such great pain ahead, only you seem an avenue of salvation.²⁴

This letter expresses the fears and challenges facing the poet confined: basic liberties such as writing letters are restricted, and the future itself appears as a road of potential violence and suffering. Andrea Brady suggests that Wieners’ family institutionalised the poet in order to “ruin his poetic gift” (Brady 2007: 26); however, Wieners’ homosexuality, and also his drug use, would have undoubtedly been further reasons for the poet’s institutionalisation and the violence he received from the hands of doctors. The impact of institutionalisation, the deprivation of freedom and the forms of violence that came with it, had a profound impact on Wieners’ psychology, writing and politics across the period. While Wieners clearly experienced forms of mental distress, as reflected in his poems and writing from this era, it is highly questionable if psychiatric incarceration at the will of his family had a positive

²³ ‘5.8’ from ‘A Series’, originally published in *Ace of Pentacles*, likely written in May 1961 (Wieners 1986: 69).

²⁴ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 12 February 1960, Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries. Hereafter cited as Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

impact on his mental health, given the testimony of its negative impact and of suffering evident in the poet's work.

A Mad and queer approach to this historical period can provide us with a nuanced grounding of the social function of the psychiatric system within which Wiener was institutionalised. In an essay historicising the contemporary incarceration of mad people in prisons, historian Michael Rembis describes the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a period of "increasing pathologization and psychiatrization of aberrant behaviours, [and] the utter (though often unspoken) disregard for disabled or mad bodies," where "the stigma associated with madness led directly to the disappearing of a 'dispensable' and 'defective' population and the 'social problems' it represented" (2014: 143). By the mid-1950s, over half a million Americans were incarcerated in mental hospitals (143-144). It was during this period that Thomas Szasz authored his highly significant critiques of psychiatry *The Myth of Mental Illness* (1960) and *The Manufacture of Madness* (1970). He writes in the latter that

It is widely believed today ... that 'mental patients,' because of their supposed incapacity to 'know what is in their own best interests,' must be cared for by their families or the state, even if that care requires *interventions imposed on them against their will* or *incarceration* in a mental hospital (1970: xv, emphasis added).

Szasz believed that psychiatry's "entire system of interlocking concepts, beliefs, and practices" were "false and immoral" (xv), and argued that its "principal problem" was one of violence: "the threatened and feared violence of the 'madman,' and the actual counter-violence of society and the psychiatrist against him" (xvii). The conclusion of such fear and violence led to "the dehumanization, oppression and persecution of the citizen branded 'mentally ill'" (xvii). Szasz pointed to the working class and criminalised status of the "typical American mental patient" (xxvii), while illustrating that under

contemporaneous *law* homosexuality was classified as a disease of “psychopathic personality, sexual deviate” – a “class A condition” (246). Thus “the homosexual is the subject of repressive legislation as a member not only of the class of criminals but also of the mentally ill” (243).²⁵ According to Szasz, psychiatrists, armed with their “correctional zeal” and equating societal “conventions” with “Nature”, treat transgressions of these conventions (such as compulsory heterosexuality) as “medical illness”, “establish themselves as agents of social control” sanctified by the state, and “disguise their punitive interventions in the semantic and social trappings of medical practice” (167).²⁶

The psychiatric hospital as the site of such trappings was also importantly critiqued in this decade. Sociologist Erving Goffman’s landmark book *Asylums* (1961) conceptualised such hospitals as a type of ‘total institution’ – in which “inmates” find their “daily activities” regimented together by higher powers “into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aims of the institution” (17); and experience ‘disculturation’ and the loss of rights to the extent of ‘civil death’ (23, 25). Furthermore, inmates experience forms of ‘systematic mortifications’ and violations to the self, including degrading admission procedures, stripping the elements of one’s identity and possessions (with the enforcement of an institutional uniform in replacement), the violation of personal safety, forms of “interpersonal contamination” of both the person and one’s possessions, exposure of personal relationships through the

²⁵ Szasz discusses the legal status of this classification in the context of the 1967 US Supreme Court’s decision to deport Clive Michael Boutilier, a Canadian national, on the basis of his homosexuality constituting ‘psychopathic personality’ (1970: 245-259).

²⁶ While Szasz’s critique of the classification of homosexuality as a disease significantly went against the grain of popular psychiatric opinion of the time, his libertarian approach toward psychiatry led to the conclusion that psychiatrists should retain the right to consider homosexuality a disease “if it helps their patients”; and that psychiatrists shouldn’t have “the power, through alliance with the state, to impose their definition of homosexuality as a disease on *unwilling* clients” (1970: 176). Given the significant social taboo around homosexuality and sanism/mentalism, Szasz’s text reads as an explicitly pre-Gay Liberation text.

surveillance and censoring of post, and the “enforced public character of visits” and group therapy (24-29).²⁷ A further mortification characteristic of hospitals includes situations where a patient may be forced to witness the violation and convulsions of someone they have ties with, whereby the latter person is administered drugs or electric shock in a public environment, and the former person is unable to intervene in the situation (39).

Wieners’ correspondence with Olson and his poetry from his six months incarcerated at Medfield detail the experiences often faced by mental patients at the time. (Olson visited Wieners while he was in hospital, although Olson also expresses the difficulties of visiting due to the hospital’s short visiting hours, which ended at 4pm).²⁸ This writing, directly expressing a language of the “injustice” of “imprisonment”,²⁹ bears witness to the degradation of mental patients denied their rights in hospital and their methods of survival. In the letter above cited, Wieners writes that “I want out and will use any means to gain same”, knowing that this will entail obeying doctors orders, and may lead to enforced medication and “such great pain”.³⁰ Wieners adds that he has “learned to pray again”. Wieners’ letters furthermore express the pressures placed on a poet committed to the expression of a visionary “unreality” through the medium of language.³¹ A poem sent to Olson, titled ‘Morning of the 25th’ opens:

²⁷ In the opening of his *Gay Sunshine* interview, Wieners discusses similar aspects of mortification and repression, particularly describing on the uniforms patients are required to wear and how they effect their gender expression (Leyland 1982: 261). I discuss the latter below.

²⁸ Charles Olson to John Wieners, 24 February 1960. Box 1, Folder 25 (John Wieners collection, MS.1994.032, John J. Burns Library, Boston College).

²⁹ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 12 February 1960.

³⁰ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 12 February 1960.

³¹ In his 1955 ‘The Untitled Journal of the Would-Be Poet’, Wieners describes embracing a “poetry of unreality”, anchored in desire and human potential and ideality, as opposed to the realism of everyday, mechanical (capitalist) metropolitan life. “I will look at the unseen clouds that you cannot see. I want dreams to be reality, I want imagination to be my weekly pay envelope” (2015b: 15-19, quoting 17).

with Mrs Hallovan, sitting on the bed,
 sunspots and all workers convene here.
 Medfield State Hospital, the secret
 source of the ring, alligators lag, nagged
 nails, snap a button, at the belly
 what we fear

Cheeks spread, thru the fore
 head bumping over nuts in the lot,
Jumping
 tractors and yellow trucks.³²

The scene of the Hospital invoked in these first two lines rapidly escalates into a vision of its power, hinting at its function within white heterosexist American society: it retains a magical, excessive quality as “the secret source of the ring”. This ring however invokes an external fence that even slows the pace and movement of reptiles. The close internal rhyme of “alligators lag” – a moment of magic, of unreal vision – and “nagged / nails” brings the magical force of the psychiatric institution and its workers back towards the physical body of the poet/patient and the policing of such bodies. Sites typically associated with intimacy, both physical (“at the belly”) and spatial (“on the bed”) become sites of “fear”; and such fear is explicitly expressed in the plural here through the pronoun “we”. The violation of the single patient does not end at the individual: Wieners’ experience is far from singular, as privacy and independence do not exist for patients in the psychiatric hospital. Fear of violation by doctors and nurses through having their “Cheeks spread” is explicitly capitalised. The violating anal examination connects “thru the fore / head” – the spreading of cheeks is reflected in the splitting of the mind through the examination and expressed here with enjambment. That is, psychiatry seems to cleave minds apart, rather than heal them, and this is further expressed in the poem with the rhyme of “spread” with “head” at the start of the following line. The violation leads to the “bumping” of the supposedly

³² John Wieners to Charles Olson, 25 February 1960, Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

loose “nuts” of “the lot” of the patients; and the casual quality of the adjective “bumping” seemingly reflects the normalised character of such violations.

Drugs also played (and continue to play) a significant role in the subjugation of mental patients, their character significantly altered for Wieners while in the hands of psychiatrists in comparison to their recreational use. Wieners comprehends that, compared to the “many drugs over these years”,³³ medication at the hands of the doctors is affecting him to the very core of his being. However, he also understands that obeying orders is the only road to discharge. A letter to Olson dated 9th March opens:

How solitary I feel here. Surrounded by the bustle of the ward, first morning I hope without medication. The drugs of course allow us to enter the vision? Any would but my touch / sense of reality is diminished to such an extent that we are pray to any passing interruption.³⁴

The use of drugs to pursue a visionary poetics of unreality has been questioned by the poet, challenged and supplanted by the numbing character of psychiatric medication. The senses of the “solitary” poet are open to “interruption” and within the environment of the hospital such interruptions are regular. The letter continues

Here I go again. Name just called for more of what takes away all spark / burst of new order on the confusion of these past two months. As you can see the handwriting changes. Back now with 3 more pills down... The stuff hits immediately and I know it's a sin to the soul but I follow orders so that my discharge may be advanced as soon as possible.

The letter expresses a dialectical impact of psychiatric medication for Wieners: the medication negates the “spark” of the poet’s senses, attenuating his sense of reality and the possibility of imaginative thought. Psychiatric medication also

³³ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 9 March [1960], Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

³⁴ John Wieners to Charles Olson, 9 March [1960].

institutes a “new order” onto the poet at the level of the senses, an “order” that has conversely produced much “confusion” for Wieners during his incarceration. This is an externally controlled order, psychiatric power distributed directly through medication to the body of the poet. That the drugs diminish the senses and mental clarity of Wieners is also visibly represented to his mentor Olson in the quality of Wieners’ writing and handwriting across the letters – a factor he repeatedly alludes to. In addition, with the negation of the poet’s senses, language itself is also deeply threatened for Wieners. In the midst of describing a “session at the piano with voices” where “a multitude of birds, lark, martin ghosts emit from those keys”, Wieners shifts from narrating the scene and the experience of an auditory hallucination to the quality of his prose. He suggests that his mentor “can see how my language is threatened here, the constant repetition of connectives”. The poet begins numerous early sentences and clauses in the letter with connectives – “How solitary[...]”, “Surrounded by[...]”, “As you can see[...]”, “So many[...]”, “If I don’t[...]”, “and I know[...]”. These shift into a sentence of clauses that read as apostrophe – “After haircut and [...]”, “what a multitude[...]”. Language is however “the only thing I can use to maintain what shreds of thought fear leaves”. The conditions of writing both letters and poetry are pressed to their extremes from psychiatric repression, as language is practically forced from the body of the poet – “Such words so foreign pulled from my mouth by the nurse”.³⁵

Yet even greater violence haunts the homosexual and gender deviant poet: he writes “If I dont get out soon therapy includes electrical catheter treatment, something I dont need at all, but which is being fostered here at such a clip that even my own deepest reserves are threatened”. Such ‘treatment’ and the

³⁵ John Wieners to Charles Olson, ‘Leap Year’ [29 February 1960], Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

context of the social repression of gay men (and women and men more generally) through the law and psychiatry is detailed and heavily critiqued in the Gay Liberation press in the early 1970s. An article by Don Jackson, published by *Gay Sunshine* in 1970, highlights the experimental treatments of psychiatrists on gay and sexually deviant men incarcerated under the *Mentally Disordered Sex Offenders Act* in California, a state law which criminalised acts such as same-sex kissing in public and could lead to indefinite imprisonment in a state hospital (1973).³⁶ Such treatment included various forms of aversion therapy including testing succinylcholine, the use of electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) and “penile responses therapy” (45). Succinylcholine here is used to induce “acute anxiety death panic” in the patient – whose respiration stops, who feel as if they are suffocating and drowning, and is taken to “the brink of death” – before staff “attempt behaviour modification” by telling the patient “how wicked he is” (43-44).³⁷ ECT renders the patient unconsciousness due to its severity, and what Jackson’s article describes as “penile responses therapy” entails showing the patient pornography in order to encourage erections, followed by the delivery of electric shocks directly to the patient’s genitals to discourage such responses (44-46). Jackson’s article includes testimony from gay men on the use of such ‘therapy’ by psychiatrists in an attempt to “cure” patients of their homosexuality, a commonplace practice at the time. Michael Seth Stewart’s editorial work on Wieners’ letters includes deeply moving letter from the poet to gay publisher, writer and his legal co-custodian Irving Rosenthal (November 9, 1961), which prior to a profession of “great affection” and deep regards for Rosenthal and his support for Wieners, details the violence the poet faced from psychiatric ‘treatment’ including electroshock:

³⁶ Jackson’s ‘dachau for queers’ was originally published in *Gay Sunshine* (No. 1 Issue 3, November 1970).

³⁷ For a discussion of the development of this treatment, see Landerson/Liberation News Service (1974).

I wish I had some memory of last year, but I do not, of living with you, of your kindness, but all is blank. All I remember is waking up in the hospital, trying to get well in April, and finally after 30 shock treatments at Bournewood [a private psychiatric hospital in Brookline, Massachusetts], and 91 insulin treatments at Metropolitan State, I was discharged last August 25th. And I am quite well; [...] and think about my past, which is most tantalizing as I believe the shock treatments took away my memory.

I have no memory of Medfield, or the many visits there, of your calls, or the trip to New York. I have most of the information from my mother second-hand, that I was even on East 8th Street; what we lived like, where, and how we survived from day to day with no money I do not know, except it must have been through your generosity (Stewart 2014: 278).

The decimation of Wieners' memory through such 'treatment' is by no means unique. Don Weitz, an antipsychiatry activist, writes that the long-term and permanent effects of electroshock include brain damage, retrograde and anterograde amnesia ("memory loss for personal experiences and events occurring months or years *before* ECT" and "memory loss of recently learned information, knowledge, or experiences *after* ECT" respectively), difficulty with concentration and reading, effects on intelligence and the "loss of creativity"; it can cause trauma and sometimes death (2013: 159-160, author's emphasis).³⁸ Wieners' poem 'Two Years Later' paints a stark picture of the invasive impact of ECT across three brief lines – "The hollow eyes of shock remain / Electric sockets burnt out in the / skull" – the capitalised 'E' of "Electric" stating the weight of its charge (1986: 93). Wieners' archive presents the tensions between the survival of his life and work, the destruction of his life and work at the hands of psychiatry. However, his lack of memory of his own life among gay

³⁸ Weitz describes the procedure and the political campaigns that have been launched against it in Canada. He notes that the procedure involves tranquilizers and muscle relaxants that paralyze the body's muscles, leaving the 'patient' unable to breathe. "The person is asleep or unconscious during the treatment". "An average of 200 volts of electricity is delivered to the brain". This leads to a seizure that last around 1 minute, followed by a "[c]oma lasting 10-20 minutes" and "[u]pon awakening, the person immediately experiences a severe, migraine type headache that last for a few hours, disorientation (e.g., not knowing your name, where you are), confusion, muscle and physical weakness, nausea and memory loss" (2013: 159). Still in use today, Weitz emphasises that the practice should be banned given it "is a serious violation of human rights and medical ethics" (160).

poets, their role in his survival, and the affections they have shared, seem in the aftermath of 'treatment' incredibly difficult for the poet to express and render legible. The postscript of his letter to Rosenthal reads:

I want to mail this off, right away before I tear it up.

Tell me about that forgotten year. B. Moraaff mentions that I had a notebook, called Jewels, which is either lost, or possibly with some things if any left with you.

If only I was there, I don't know how long it would last, but right now, it is close to love (Stewart 2014: 280).³⁹

Under the historical conditions of the repression of the queer, institutionalised poet outlined above, poetry alongside religion form two key tenets of survival for Wieners. Wieners' poems from his 1961 Journal written while incarcerated in Metropolitan State Hospital – published in *Strictly Illegal* (Wieners 2011: 80-96) – dramatize the survival of the mind of the poet and of poetry itself amidst the profound un-freedom of psychiatric incarceration and its violent destruction of the poet's memory. Here we find a strained yearning for salvation from God that is unmatched anywhere else in his oeuvre.⁴⁰ In a poem shaped like a pyramid, Wieners calls to "God" for redemption in the single word of the poem's opening line (83). Through such redemption, he writes, "living man may bathe again", whereby the "soul" of a rejuvenated Wieners may "jump in the surf that saves it / from madness, pursuit of demons, drawbacks to the kiss" (83).

³⁹ Wieners' letter includes a poem, titled 'IF', the opening lines of which read "only someone would call and take me out riding / in the afternoon / we would park under the trees and make love" (Stewart 2014: 280).

⁴⁰ A study on Wieners, his (sometimes fallen) Catholicism and his internalisation of religious belief is much needed to understand its implications for his verse. I do not undertake a sufficient analysis of this here, beyond a few references to the original text. The poems speak frequently of "The spiritus rector of our fate" (86) and "the / Sacred Master who dictates all things" (89) who repeatedly appears to the poet in dreams.

Poetry and religion – alongside nature and Romance (of '30s and '40 Hollywood films) – become the provisions towards salvation and survival under great duress: revising his 1959 thoughts that despite the explicitly personal “salvation” that he had found in poems, poetry was “no more *holy* act than, say shitting”,⁴¹ Wieners now writes that “I now come to find writing a poem is the most / sacred act of my existence” (89). Wieners is writing under duress to the extent that the hospital as the mediator of his experiential site of “chaos” is never named. These are poems from the inside of incarceration, where denigrating the hospital publically may violently backfire into forms of repression and the loss of fragile ‘privileges’; freedom, such as weekend visits to Boston, is figured positively in this context (“Rain today and I *can* go in Boston / *without slang*,” 80, my emphasis).⁴² In another, somewhat hopeful plea for salvation, he writes “Against the darkening a light / Against confinement a lock left loose. / Against the abuse of my own body I promise a / give most divine” (84). The power of psychiatry to bring darkness, to confine and abuse the poet, is here syntactically inseparable from the need for divine relief – relief through writing verse itself.

4.5 “And in the day I am tormented by the memory”:⁴³ poetry as elixir and the knowledge of the Mad

Under the conditions of psychiatric incarceration, poetry must become “the accumulation / of all days, the first spear into the / exposed face of chaos” (89);

⁴¹ 707 *Scott Street*, Wieners 1996: 44, original emphasis.

⁴² As postcard from Wieners to Olson, sent during this hospitalisation and regarding a visit to his mentor, Wieners writes “I will be there ... JUST For the day. Am now doing time in a hospital + am only allowed weekends off”. John Wieners to Charles Olson, 13 June 1961, Series 2, Box 220, Charles Olson Research Collection. Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UConn.

⁴³ Wieners 2011: 92.

as days have been stripped of nearly all content in the hospital and are now a representation of diminishing life, the music of poetry itself is threatened. As if speaking to both friends and speaking back to the powers of psychiatry, Wiener utters in a diminished declarative “You ask me what the day engenders / Hidden in a cranny here. Nothing”; he follows these lines with the lamentation that “In the hollow corners of my world, my / mind, my days, all pass by unaccounted for. // Melody lost melody” (91). Poetry must capture whatever melody found in these days:

The day withdraws, each day a lessening
of the true life, trials by which we are
judged. Do we defile any? How we suffer
the passing of each hour, turning the
Kaleidoscope. No more to taste the sweet
elixir of love (‘Thursday, August 3 1961’, 86).

In this poem, the possibility of judgment from God has been diminished by the judgment of psychiatry. The religious tone in the language of the third line suggests innocence in regards to, or maybe even an impossibility of, “defil[ing]” the day. The hours of the day are painfully diminished to the observation of light, fractured and scattered on the glass of the “Kaleidoscope”, the senses medicated and ordered by doctors, left to rotate endlessly. That queer love could fill the day is an extinguished dream.

A poem written the following week opens “Some days it is not possible to do more / than exist” (88). As with numerous other poems in the journal, such statements on the life under duress are followed by light, imagist lines that recall the shorter works of H.D., with slight forays into the unreal: “hearing the snow drop in her outstretched / hand. And seeing the tops of swaying / pine trees. What little breeze there is[.]” Time and time again in the journal, capturing the images of nature and the sounds of birds “is enough to refresh

my soul". However, the sonic embrace of the image of the snowdrop, similar to the sound of birds emerging from the piano, suggests the possibility of another form of vision emerging out of the broken, kaleidoscopic senses. This is vividly constitutive of *Ace of Pentacles*, and here the poem closes noting that the poet's "soul" is "hidden / with the crown jewels under His throne".

However, both beauty and the momentary "pleasure" in a poetics of recollection, such as meeting "an old friend", are relative to the *difficulty* of retaining and "recollecting" memories – "But to lose your mind, suffer amnesia, as the Winter and Fall tides drift by" (90). The repression and violence of institutional psychiatry specifically targeting the homosexual poet amount to a traumatic violation and destruction of the site of memory, which, alongside the reversal of the seasons, Wieners notes "of course is an offence to God". The poem dated 'Thursday, August 24, 1961' – the day before Wieners' discharge, and the poem later edited and reprinted in *Behind the State Capitol* as 'For What Time Slays' (Wieners 1975: 33)⁴⁴ – opens with eight imagist lines and thoughts of Whitman's "crowds", as the bleak ninth line remembers they are "now dead":

And in the day I am tormented by the memory
of warm supper clubs at night, never crowded
the way a young man opens the door, Mambah singing
there, as Mabel Mercer, on a kitchen chair.

For I have looked down into the pit and turned away
trembling. (92)

The poem pain(t)s a scene of a casual and sweet queer supper club in the present tense, the causal queer encounters that would occur within, and the interracial mixing and cabaret performances that might occur spontaneously "there". The references to DuBose Heyward's 1929 novel *Mamba's daughters*,

⁴⁴ Reprinted in *Supplication* (Wieners 2015a: 137). The poem appears immediately before 'Children of the Working Class' in *Behind the State Capitol*, a book which according to Raymond Foye, Wieners encouraged us to read as a "a single work – a single poem" (Wieners 1986: 20).

Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and the performance of its songs by Mabel Mercer however reach backwards across the decades into the '40s, '30s and '20s.⁴⁵ Yet the recollection of such memories has been transformed in "torment". The forms of aversion therapy discussed above would have had such an impact, as the recollection of the site of pleasure faces violent negation through methods such as ECT, burning through the possibility of memory itself. With fear of this hell staring down the poet, he remains anchored to the "eternal" (84) of both religion and poetry. Furthermore, while the violent negation of memory by psychiatry appears as the pit of hell, death resides in the asylum.

'Death and Babylon'

And how will I face it but turn my face
 aside, back to the wall from whence it
 comes. Not recognise it in emerald green
 rags. The beggar by the roadside. The
 mad by the cemetery walls. Laughing at
 some secret joke that expands into a uni-
 verse that explains all one needs to know
 about the daily proximity of dying. (87).

Here the poet, seemingly humbled in the possibility of having to face his own extinction, calmly considers turning the other cheek, up against the walls of the asylum "from whence [death] / comes". The poet considers – in the second sentence of the poem, which is explicitly not a question – if he would recognise death in the image of the hospital inmate, demonically appearing in patient's uniform. These are "rags" that negate any potential vibrancy in both the patient *and* in the description of their "emerald green" colour, life and language "sapped" over a line break to their naming as "rags". Speaking in his 1973 *Gay Sunshine* interview, Wieners describes the gendered deviance of homosexuals

⁴⁵ Heyward, DuBose (1929) *Mamba's daughters* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Co.). The novel addresses inter-racial class relations in Charleston, South Carolina. With Ira Gershwin, Heyward co-wrote the libretto for George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (1934), based on the novel. Mabel Mercer produced a record of songs from *Porgy and Bess* in 1942.

and straight men and women incarcerated in asylums from society's ideal heteronormative gender role, arguing that this is part of the reasoning behind their incarceration; and furthermore describes the patient's "regimented" and "identical" uniform as a tool of repression.⁴⁶ Through medication and uniforms, to quote, "resentment and outrage are chained down", leading to the disculturation of the patient whose "individual sense of particularity is sapped within ninety days" (Leyland 1982: 261). The poem insists that to recognise death in the patient's uniform, occupying the body of the patient, is to understand that one lives in "the daily proximity of dying". However, recognition can only come through knowledge. The poem's fourth, short sentence sights "The / mad by the cemetery walls.", catching its composure over a line break, before witnessing their knowing laughter, their humour holding their knowledge. If we are to valorise the knowledge of the Mad as Mad Studies argues is necessary, we here may find "all one needs to know" to survive psychiatric incarceration – in life or at least in and through verse. Wieners' 'I' initially sounds its individuality here, aware of its on-going initiation into the secrecy of survival. The asylum walls bleed into "the cemetery walls", the latter named definitively. If to be in the asylum is to live in the proximity of dying, the walls of the asylum are already the walls of the cemetery. Wieners' back faces both. It is the cackle against the 'sanity' – sanity which itself condemns the Mad in capitalist America – that here "expands into a uni- / verse": as the syntax of the final sentence grows across four lines, the poem echoes its understanding into a singular, clear voice built through a

⁴⁶ Speaking of the expressions of sexuality and gender within the asylum, Wieners says: "I would say that the homosexual is repugnant, repelled by others, even in the insane asylums. They're looked on as somewhat apart, more extravagant in gestures and mannerisms. Most of the women are oversized, usually with masculine characteristics. And the men seem to be underdeveloped as to an ideal manhood. I suppose they are in those institutions just because we have created stereotyped roles of what people should look like; what they should wear; how they should converse. Because these individuals fill none of these roles, they're incarcerated" (Leyland 1982: 261).

multiplicity of knowledge. The enjambment in the middle of “uni- / verse” emphasises the Othered worldliness of the knowledge of the Mad – it is expansive, many, uncharted, a secret born in the survival of violence to the depths of one’s core being, which here sings through poetry. While one’s life may be extinguished, the knowledge of the violence lives materially in the body, or here for Wieners, the means by which one might live is captured in the vivid brevity of the poetic.

4.6 “that all the doctors in the world won’t help”: Wieners’ psychiatric survivor consciousness and poetics ⁴⁷

Wieners’ writing from the early 1970s further expands and charts the knowledge of the Mad, rapidly developing in its politicisation between 1971-73, explicitly advancing theories on causes of Madness and mental distress from his standpoint as a psychiatric survivor feminine gay man within capitalist American society. In his 1970/71 text ‘The Problem with Madness’ (2007: 37-39), Wieners writes that Madness is a “genetic weakness” rooted in the class struggles and traumas faced by one’s parents and ancestors, while the trials and traumas of love and desire that many queer people (and psychiatrised people) experienced would also be sources of extreme mental distress. “Unpleasant experiences one is unable to forget, disappointments in love, physicality, longing, frustration, sexuality, these all produce disease”. “broken from the womb, and horribly shriven / at the labor of their forefathers, if you check back”, he continues, in the early stanzas of the poem ‘Children of the Working Class’, explicitly situated at its opening as written “from incarceration, Taunton

⁴⁷ ‘Plymouth: A Test on Corpses’ (Wieners 1986: 236-237).

State Hospital, 1972". However, next to these lines which may be read as essentialising Madness ("broken from the womb") and situating within the material conditions of Wieners' upbringing, the latter poem paints a bleak picture of the state of neglect, disculturation, physiology and exploitative labour that faces the inmates of the asylum – as the trembling pit of death's walls is written into a direct, concrete existence. Maria Damon describes Wieners' writing "as a non-subject who is nonetheless quivering with undefended subjectivity" – describing an institution that reduces "the most abject" to "bare life" lacking human rights, while accusing "god" of sadism (2014: 79, 78). The poet explicitly positions himself as "one of them":

there are worse, whom you may never see, non-crucial around
the
spoke, these you do, seldom,
locked in Taunton State Hospital and other peon work farms
drudge from morning until night, abandoned within destitute
crevices odd clothes
intent on performing some particular task long has been far removed
there is no hope, they locked-in key's; housed of course

and there fed, poorly
off sooted, plastic dishes, soiled grimy silver knives and forks,
stamped Department of Mental Health spoons
but the unshrinkable duties of any society
produces its ill-kempt, ignorant and sore idiosyncrasies. (l. 16-29)

The syntax of the lines bookending the first of these stanzas (line 24 and lines 16-18) condenses otherwise prosaic stanzas, which produces an uncharacteristic clarity for the poet's writing from the period, in one of the poet's most polemical texts. In the second of these stanzas, Wieners specifically emphasises the social *production* of capitalist American society's "broken", 'crazy' people, the cause of those America considers "ignorant" and "idiosyncratic". This is not to say that the poet himself does not intimately understand, feel, or experience the consequences of external and internalised stigmas against psychiatrised people – on the contrary 'Children' is both a litany of such stigma, affirming its

violence and inhabiting its degradation. In (one of) her readings of this poem, Damon importantly argues the poet's need for a "process" to "continue documenting his mutable sense of reality as well as his [working] class outrage, witnessing and being witnessed by a God who regards the poor with indifferent, uninvested contempt,[...] as a counter to the loneliness on which he has blamed his schizophrenia" (2011: 187). She furthermore argues that "the poem also reveals, both in its content and its broken syntax and orthography, the extent to which the critical distance of formal writing has become untenable" for Wieners (ibid). Indeed, critical distance may be impossible when one advances speculative theories of Madness while one is incarcerated: "I feel I shall / have to be punished for writing this" writes Wieners in the final stanza of the poem. The conditions from which the Mad poet speaks are brutal, grim and devastating; and as the poet's consciousness and politics develop alongside his involvement in the liberation movements following his time in Taunton State. 'Plymouth: A Test on Corpses' (1986: 236-237) dates from early 1973, mediating on political strategy, sexual repression and social transformation.⁴⁸

On the bus, riding back
by the bay, after seeing
both the psychologist and the psychiatrist
Doktors Keville and Browne, M.D.

I remember Gavin Douglas' testimony
you see them in these small towns,
Community Counseling Service really
a front for the Mayflower Mental Health Assoc.

that all the doctors in the world won't help,
not without a 2nd Civil War on our hands, and
the revolutionary optimism after struggle absent,
in business, practice & malpractice.

⁴⁸ Wieners discusses the trip he made to Plymouth in his *Gay Sunshine* interview, which was published in March/April 1973 (Leyland 1982: 262). This poem is contemporaneous to 'Viva' (Wieners 2015a: 115), which is discussed above.

In comparison to his attempts to explain the condition of the (gay) mental patient, Wieners opens 'Plymouth' with the implication that the medical practice in question involves deceit and violence akin to that of the Ku Klux Klan – the letter 'c' of 'doctors' has been transformed into a letter 'k' giving "Doktors" as their professional title.⁴⁹ This is a poem which understands that such violence manifests in "plot[s] to heal", where healing has been inverted and is thus "unneedful in the first place". Wieners mobilises his linguistic strength through both a rhetorical tone and word choice, asking "how to take up arms against advice" and referring to Rainer Maria Rilke, "whereabouts the monster who still pays for the atrocities in our acknowledged civilization?" in the same sentence; and deploying verbs such as "retaliate", "resistance", and the more archaic "expiate". Giving voice to the testimony of Mental Patients' Liberation in stanza two, Wieners echoes the critique that the contemporaneous 'care in the community' model may not be what it seems – the community-based alternatives to institutionalisation championed by US President Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s appear here as "a front" for their co-optation by doctors invested in "business, practice and malpractice". As Castell, Castell and Lovell argue in *The Psychiatric Society*, both deinstitutionalisation and care in the community were both in practice myths (1982: 125-174). The vision of the latter remained unrealised through a combination of politically motivated funding cuts for mental health and welfare by Richard Nixon's Administration. In addition, there was a lack of concrete understanding around what care in the community ought to entail, and extensive freedoms were given to local authorities to decide who ran community mental health centres, for what ends (including whether they were public or private) and what price, and where they

⁴⁹ In a text '1972-73' published in *Fag Rag*, Wieners describes such "doktors" as "fascist doctors", in *Fag Rag* 5 (Summer 1973), 13. For a detailed study of the racialised character of psychiatric violence in this period, see Metzl (2011).

were located. This fed the power imbalances between professionals and service users in the organisation and provision of services, in a situation where “patients... were drawn largely from the most vulnerable and underprivileged groups in the society, whose way of life and cultural backgrounds could not have been more different from center officials” (1982: 143).⁵⁰

As the lines of Wieners’ poem grow and extend with the poet’s rhetorical strength, stanza three articulates a situation where “revolutionary optimism” – be that of the political reform to mental healthcare, or of the liberation movements who would wage a “2nd Civil War” or whose existence had been born from violence and “struggle” – fails to translate into the provision of care by professionals.⁵¹

Returning to his more classical poetic influences in the fourth stanza, Wieners writes of a gay praxis drawn from the affectivities of his formal poetic and romantic influences of “ancient women” (who one might assume for Wieners are Sappho, H.D., Edna St Vincent Millay, Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday). The song of heartbreak is transliterated into a refusal of medical “practice” as “malpractice”; and into the practice of asserting sexual deviance, protest and

⁵⁰ Castell, Castell and Lovell provide a detailed, multifaceted critique of the illusions behind care in the community. They write that “of the 2,000 community mental health centers envisioned for 1980, only 400 existed in 1975, most of which were built between 1967 and 1972” (130). They furthermore detail the arbitrary definition of ‘community’ according to population-sizes and areas, and the specific forms of community participation manifest. They describe examples of community health centres, including the Lindeman Community Mental Health Center in Boston, where the use of traditional methods and “an enormous, imposing edifice” discouraged its use by “underprivileged residents of the surrounding neighborhoods” (134). Furthermore, discussing examples of services that *are* “organized and operated by the community”, they claim, “services tend to be no more revolutionary in conception or execution than in centers elsewhere, though they do tend to be more comprehensive” (146). Compare to the ‘real alternatives’ detailed by Chamberlin (1978). For a contemporary account describing the numerous problems with Community Mental Health Care, see Shimrat (in LeFrançois, Menzies and Reaume 2013: 144-157).

⁵¹ Representing his political development between his incarceration in Taunton State and this poem, Wieners’ rhetorical confidence here appears to give support to the necessity of second civil war, compared with July 1972’s ‘Playboy’ where he writes “Imamu Amiri Baraka sits in a darkened hotel room planning for the second / Civil War. I work this dawn thinking of the innocent dead in our country and their senseless slaughter in our streets... I am unsure of my / position here.” (1988: 127).

refusal in the face of the “state” and its “hirelings” – to “pervert, prevent, prescribe none their business”. Yet any praxis, be it that of political action or of building strength through literature, remains tied to the impact of sexual repression, and such repression must be read “in [the] face of // ancient heroes”. As the poem’s lines continue to grow we are offered Wieners’ vision of what might change both socially and personally: one might be rid of the “jealousy” of doctors that ruins sexual expression, be it in the home or when “cruising around the Cape”. However, revolution will not change the deep sensibility – an Olsonian “proprioception” (1973: 181-182) – that comes from the poet’s psychiatrised body even in moments of “hostile mania”, the strongest memories of sexual and poetic awakenings of his life, and the visions of poets and seemingly-closeted psychologists. The poem is lucid and clear on the questions of liberation politics, if dense regarding its psychological theory – the books must be balanced for the expense of the “atrocities” committed in the name of “civilization”. The penultimate stanza, brimming with repeated hard consonant sounds (b’s, p’s and d’s) and strong prefixes (ex-’s and re-’s), makes a political rallying cry against a “corrupted”, unglamorous (“callow”) Government. The need for anti-mentalist practices of mental difference and “resistance” couldn’t come sooner, although the language of Wieners’ cry of “inhabit your bailiwick to breakneck resistance” retains a classicism that one can only imagine in service of a movement.

4.7 Conclusion: Boston Mental Patients’ Liberation Front

This chapter has traced the historical and political dimensions of John Wieners’ writing and archive, focusing on his experiences of psychiatric incarceration

and the development of his political consciousness through the Mental Patients' Liberation and Gay Liberation movements in Boston in the early 1970s. I have argued that literary critiques of Wieners have often missed the historical context of Wieners' psychiatric incarceration, naturalising the violence committed in its name, including upon the poet himself. To read the survival of Wieners through his letters and diary poems from the early 1960s is to glean part of the affect and threats of psychiatric violence, where the writing of poetry and the moments of experience, perception and proprioception captured in verse became a means to life for the poet.

Outlining the liberation and transformation of Wieners' consciousness regarding psychiatric incarceration and mental patients' liberation, I have argued that Wieners' 1972-73 poetry provides a politically lucid yet linguistically dense rallying cry against the State, psychiatry, homophobia and sanism. To conclude, I briefly turn to an important document produced by Boston's Mental Patients' Liberation Front. In 1974, the MPLF produced *Your Rights as a Mental Patient in Massachusetts*, which Chamberlin describes as "a remarkable fifty-six page document that covers the laws concerning commitment, voluntary and involuntary hospitalization, the special situation of minors, patients' civil rights and treatment, as well as providing an overall strategy for fighting back" (1978: 83). The document also contained a Mental Patients' Bill of Rights – one of the first to be circulated alongside the one produced by the New York Mental Patients' Liberation Project.⁵² Chamberlin emphasizes that the Boston MPLF document specifically highlights one's right to patient-run, alternative facilities, and describes how it addresses social and

⁵² New York Mental Patients' Liberation Front [1971], 'A Mental Patient's Liberation Project: Statement and Bill of Rights'. In *The Radical Therapist* (1974), edited by the *Radical Therapist/Rough Times* Collective. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

material difficulties facing ex-patients, such as “problems of child custody, government access to psychiatric records, job discrimination, difficulty in getting a driver’s license, discrimination in admission to colleges and graduate school, and the fear and distrust you feel towards ex-patients” (83). These documents provide a key insight into the discourses and political work undertaken within the Mental Patients’ Liberation Movement, in Boston and beyond – to challenge the institutions of psychiatry and the State, but furthermore to provide support and affirmation to psychiatric survivors, trying to rebuild and maintain their lives following incarceration. Detailing some of the forms of organising and activism, as discussed at the start of this chapter, in addition to projects such as “drop-in centres”, “communal residences”, “the setting up of crisis centers” and “the establishment of new kinds of member-controlled social service centers (such as job-finding services)”, Chamberlin affirms that “Mental patient consciousness raising may lead to many different kinds of action” (84). In addition, poetry, humour and the forms of radical consciousness that I have argued are articulated through the poetry of Wieners and the coalitional work of Mental Patients’ and Gay Liberation groups are important to these movements, to provide visions of alternative worlds and to make life under capitalism more liveable. Chamberlin highlights the concluding lines of Boston MPLF’s Bill of Rights on the difficulties facing ex-patients, which, given Wieners’ fixation on Gerald R. Ford,⁵³ reads as one of the poet’s characteristic jokes:

you probably won’t be Vice President of the United States
(Chamberlin 1978: 83).

⁵³ For a discussion of ‘World War I Historical Text’ and ‘Vera Lynn’ (Wieners 2015: 161-163), see Raha (‘Supplication’, 2015).

Chapter 5: Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism

5.1 Introduction: constituting transfeminine brokenness

To name the states of our brokenness:

depression, hurt, trauma, fatigue /
exhaustion, overwork, sadness, loneliness,
stress, mental and physical tension, isolation;
anomie & boredom & discontent;
unemployment, underemployment, low
wages;

to be disregarded as a sexual subject;
surviving abuse & abusive relationships,
incarceration, violence including sexual
violence;

anger, Madness, & the labels of 'crazy',
'psychotic', 'mentally ill';¹ the transphobic
slurs that are too familiar;

to be outcast, or the pariah, to be exiled;

the disqualification of the transfeminine;

To speak of desire in its multiplicities: the survival and breathing and possibility
of transfeminine desire amid and beyond our social and material conditions – of
austerity, racism, xenophobia, transphobia and transmisogyny, ableism,

¹ The labeling of transfeminine people as 'crazy', due to supposedly erratic behavior and emotions, must necessarily be understood in the context of gendered norms that privilege certain forms of sanity. Given its length, this chapter refrains from undertaking this work. For a discussion connecting trans activism to Mad activism and Mad Studies in Canada, see Kirby (2014).

whorephobia.² How can we connect these conditions that undergird the negative affects of transfeminine life, to ground a politicized understanding of our brokenness?

To speak of our states of brokenness: states where bodies are jammed, depowered, isolated, the struggle to begin to speak of these states; states of anger, distress and depression, each feeding into the next; the horizon of the day closing,³ closed, the pull of inactivity, tending towards the rejection of sociality; a state in which we suspend care for our bodies, or are isolated in caring for our bodies; the fact that the quick fixes in self-care offered by capital, commodity exchange and consumption are largely unaffordable; the state in which concentration disintegrates in front of one's pleasures; to go to the workplace or Jobcentre Plus,⁴ silent, alienated, reinforcing one's depression; the state of understanding the workplace as a ruse of the expression of one's self and gender;⁵ the state in which one's humanity is disqualified due to the work one undertakes, disqualified as feminists or as women for selling sex as a means to money, the psychic fallout of such disqualifications; the state in which

² This combination intends to reflect the mutual reinforcement between these social and material conditions – racism, transphobia and whorephobia need to be understood through an integrated, historicizing lens in order to understand the multiple forms of violence levied at trans women of colour, including trans women of colour sex workers. For a nuanced discussion of the issues around transfeminine stereotyping and these bodily intersections, see Aizura (2014).

³ I think of this horizon as in a dialectical relation with Muñoz's formulation of queerness as a horizon of possibility (2009: 1).

⁴ The Jobcentre Plus is the front line office for unemployment benefit in the UK (Job Seekers' Allowance) and work-related disability benefits (such as Employment and Support Allowance, or ESA). The treatment of Jobcentre Plus users has been violently rationalized by Conservative-led Governments since 2010. There have been a number of media controversies surrounding suicidal claimants. While there are currently no critical accounts of trans people's experiences of the Jobcentre Plus, accounts of how ESA has been used as a means to force people with disabilities back into work are numerous.

⁵ A ruse to forms of queer and trans social reproduction. In context of certain forms of gendered labor, the expression of one's gender may be part of the work (see Weeks 2011).

community and cohesion do not materialize into socially reproductive, sustainable care (beyond lovers and individual friends); a state in which discourses of sexuality and sexual reproduction elide the lived particularities of our bodies;⁶ a state without a discourse to speak of abuse and its impact on trans and queer bodies and lives in our/their particulars; a state in which desire and need and love emerge only through the inauguration of worlds that do not yet exist. Such are the states of our brokenness.

5.2 Trans Liberalism at the borders of Brexit

At this pivotal, historical moment of neoliberal structural adjustment following the 2008 financial crisis and the ascendancy of far right politics this decade, the position of transgender people is marked by extreme contradiction. There is little doubt that public discourse and consciousness of trans issues in the West is developing, in part through positive media representation and trans celebrities, hailed as ‘The Transgender Tipping Point’ by *Time Magazine*’s May 2014 issue which featured Laverne Cox on its cover. Along with this new visibility comes a fresh push for transgender legal rights, including the pursuit of widespread legal gender recognition, employment rights, rights for trans-related healthcare, and marriage rights. However, the stratification of liveable trans and gender non-conforming lives along the lines of race, class, gender, dis/ability, nationality and migration status remains firmly and increasingly in place, as neoliberal governments disinvest in social security, ramp up racialised policing and the criminalization of certain – largely Muslim and Black – migrant persons, and facilitate innovative methods in the upward

⁶ For a significant enactment and discussion of transfeminine sexual reproduction, see cárdenas (2016).

redistribution of wealth while amplifying xenophobic rhetoric and policy. This moment of liberal transgender politics, which I have elsewhere described as “trans liberalism,” harmonizes with global capitalist restructuring and reaffirms this stratification (Raha 2015). Such capitalist restructuring takes forms known as austerity, structural adjustment and the extraction of wealth from surplus populations including incarcerated people (Wang 2018), alongside migrant persons and refugees.

Following the election of Donald Trump in the USA, the outcome of the UK’s referendum to leave the European Union (aka Brexit) and the far right populism that is captivating large parts of the globe (Brazil, Hungary, Poland, Italy, India, among others), the politics of trans liberalism faces potential backlash from the far right. While the particular local and national contexts of trans politics and consciousness of trans issues across these countries varies considerably, the project of trans legal enfranchisement through parliamentary democracy may be undermined through increased policing at the level of one’s citizenship, as ‘immigration enforcement’ is both rhetorically invoked and practically implicated across all spheres of public and private life. In the case of the UK, Brexit further undermines the means to economic survival and access to public services for all who do not hold a UK passport working in the country – that is, the rights to remain in the country to work and live, which have already been undercut this decade for Black and/or Muslim people. Alongside the refusal of the Conservative Government led by Theresa May to guarantee job security for EU workers is the spike in racist and xenophobic violence following the referendum, amid the naturalization and perpetration of xenophobia by newspapers, the media and across social media. Although the Conservative Government can claim a progressive attitude on LGBT issues

following the legalization of Same-Sex Marriage in 2013,⁷ and while fresh trans equality legislation (the reform of the 2004 Gender Recognition Act in particular) may be put to MPs this decade, the Government has made immigration enforcement a statutory duty of employers, universities, schools, and landlords, and the UK continues to attempt to deny the right of asylum to LGBT asylum seekers. Legislation including the Prevent duty (part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) and the Immigration Act 2016 – both architected by Theresa May as Home Secretary – make it a statutory requirement for employers to check passports, visas and work permits of all those they employ and in some cases potential employees (with the possibility of facing criminal charges if they do not comply); for universities to report student attendance to the Government, at the risk of losing their power to sponsor visas for international students and significant fines; for teachers to refer students at ‘risk’ of ‘radicalization’ to the Government under the Prevent duty. Landlords face criminal charges for leasing property to people who are in the UK ‘illegally’ and the Government has extended their ‘deport first, appeal later’ scheme to all migrant persons in the UK.⁸ This is part of the materialization of the border in the workplace, the border in the home, the border in the school, the border in the university, the border at the Jobcentre Plus, the border in the hospital, the border in the marriage registry, the border in the street.

⁷ The problems of the ‘spousal veto’ clause of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 in England and Wales – through which a partner can prevent their spouse from obtaining legal gender recognition of their chosen gender, once having changed their gender in the terms of the gender binary – have been raised at length within trans activist circles.

⁸ Sian Lea (2016) ‘The Immigration Act 2016 in Plain English’, *Rights Info*, May 31 2016, online at <http://rightsinfo.org/immigration-act-2016-plain-english/> (accessed November 30 2016).

We face a new era of identity checks that will disproportionately impact people of colour and trans and gender non-conforming people (of colour), especially for people without documents or anything bar a UK passport. Trans and gender non-conforming people face particular challenges in finding work, including but by no means limited to issues with documentation, issues around discrimination (despite limited trans protections in employment and during the hiring process under the Equality Act 2010),⁹ the psychic difficulties of working within cis-dominated workplaces, alongside the underfunding of the LGBT voluntary sector amid general conditions of downsized, disinvested and precarious work, housing and public services, and the on-going criminalization of sex work. Further checks of one's immigration status will only compound these intersecting issues and create additional mental distress. The pursuit of trans rights, and LGBT rights more generally, through the channels of parliamentary democracy entails pursuing rights while the means of accessing those rights becomes predicated on our status as UK passport holders with access to wealth. This is not to say that the rights we currently have – particularly the Equality Act 2010 – should not be defended; we must however be hyper-aware of how these rights can be undermined through other means that may not be clearly demarcated as 'transgender issues'. The most visible instance may be the Government's current plans to scrap the UK's Human Rights Act 1998, which codifies the European Convention on Human Rights. The next stage of the transformation of material conditions under austerity in the UK thus couples the dismantling of social support, the welfare state and the privatization of the National Health Service to the introduction of the border

⁹ In the UK, discriminating against employees, or potential employees during the hiring process, for the characteristic of their 'gender reassignment' (broadly understood as anyone who is undergoing or has undergone a process of transition) is outlawed under the Equality Act 2010.

into all aspects of life. On which side of the border trans activism places its support will be critical for the efficacy and power of this activist movement.

To return to an argument made in the introduction to this thesis: it is statistically and socially evident – wherever such statistics exist – that capitalist restructuring and austerity policies have a disproportionate impact on LGBTQ people and people of colour.¹⁰ Manifestations of intermeshing forms of transphobia and transmisogyny, anti-blackness, racism, xenophobia, whorephobia, femmephobia and ableism, working in concert to create conditions of slow death, social death and actual death for poor trans women and trans femmes / of colour and/or trans sex workers, are inextricable from structural economic transformations and exacerbated by the fresh governance around immigration.¹¹ At the extreme end of this continuum of violence is the murder of trans women, and trans women of colour and trans sex workers in particular, variously across the globe, and the over-representation of trans and gender non-conforming people in the prison populations such as in the USA.¹² In suggesting that these social and economic conditions create a situation of slow death for poor trans women and trans femmes / of colour and/or sex workers, I draw on Lauren Berlant's formulation where "*slow death* refers to the physical wearing out of a population in a way that points to its deterioration as a defining condition of its experience and historical existence" (2011: 95).

¹⁰ Mitchell et al. (2013); Runnymede Trust (2015). There is yet to be research quantifying the impact of austerity politics and economic policy on trans people in the UK, yet alone on trans people of colour.

¹¹ I have used the grammatical construction 'poor trans women and trans femmes / of color and/or trans sex workers' to emphasize that each of these description may intermesh with each other.

¹² For a presentation of the issues facing trans and gender nonconforming people in prison, see Stanley and Smith (2011). Social Death is a term developed by Orlando Patterson, see *Slavery and social death: a comparative study* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1982).

Berlant argues that this is part of “the phenomena of collective physical and psychic attenuation from the effects of global/national regimes of capitalist structural subordination and governmentality” (95). This formulation presents a conceptual bridge of the affects and experience of transfeminine brokenness – the constellation of affective states named in the introduction to this chapter – to our position as poor feminized bodies within neoliberal capitalist societies, whose situations may never be alleviated through trans rights, hate crime laws, et al. In suggesting that poor transfeminine people exist and live within a situation of slow death, I do not intend to romanticize or fetishize trans life in general, and transfeminine life in particular, in a manner that dehumanizes these/our lives (which in the context of cultural representation, leaves audiences to take pity on our lives while we are stripped of agency); nor do I intend to re-inscribe the pathologisation of trans life – especially disabled trans life. Rather, I intend to politicize our sense of feeling as a part of social and material injustice that must be transformed; and to centre this physical and psychic attenuation in a historicized understanding of our experience.

The quantification of social and material challenges facing LGBTQ people in general, and trans people in particular, often leaves little space to conceptualize the affective and emotional experiences that cohere and dematerialize under these conditions and their political implications. Quantitative or statistical analysis also circumvents questions of agency and the opportunity to conceptualize transfeminist life and struggle as enacted and supported through forms of collectivity – of practical support, knowledge sharing, or politicized world-making. This chapter offers one account of the social and material basis on which transfeminine life is fractured and the affects of such fractures. I offer it with an awareness that the political and material background of trans and

queer liberalisms within contemporary neoliberal capitalism ensures that certain groupings of poor, trans and queer people are class fodder as cheap, precarious labour for the reproduction of capital—at best granted formal legal rights, but at a cost. We struggle to afford to access these rights in the same way that neoliberalism has us struggling to pay the rent,¹³ and with our rights we encounter fresh forms of racialised, xenophobic policing from the street to spheres of public and private life. I offer it in hope of the trans and queer world-making project that builds a coalitional politics, mutual care and support, around the affects of transfeminine brokenness (a project on-going in certain places); and in the knowledge that new forms of (potentially militant) femininities may grow through such projects. This chapter carries with the negative to synthesize possibility and inform action, to politicize our conception of these feelings for radical praxis.

The politics I and others have named radical transfeminism emerges in this political context. Radical transfeminism is a collective political praxis and critique developing in the tenuously-United Kingdom and in Europe, centring transfeminine bodies that are or find themselves precariously employed, poor, overworked, unemployed, pathologised – bodies of colour and various shades of white; migrant bodies; dis/abled bodies; and/or ‘working’ bodies. Radical transfeminism is oriented to forms of care and support and to “working”

¹³ There has yet to be a test case of trans discrimination in the workplace under the Equality Act 2010. Following their introduction in 2012, employment tribunal fees for discrimination cases now stand at £250 to make a claim and £950 to take the claim to a hearing. UK Government (2016) ‘Make a claim to an employment tribunal’ (October 25 2016), online at <https://www.gov.uk/employment-tribunals/make-a-claim> (accessed November 28 2016). Furthermore, dramatic cuts to legal aid over this decade that have affected access to the law, to the extent that criminal lawyers and barristers staged strikes against further cuts in 2014.

together,¹⁴ over and across material precarity.¹⁵ The forms I am speaking of here include forms of cultural production – art can be a powerful means for affective solidarity – alongside moments of political protest and solidarity and forms of trans and queer socially reproductive labour (as elaborated in Chapter 2). Radical transfeminism intends to turn the tides of trans and queer liberalism through ground-level action in the world: showing the limits of reformist politics and understanding the situation of contemporary Europe’s ascendant far right politics and the refusal of its governments to register the humanity of people fleeing war and violence perpetrated by both Western states and ISIS in the middle east and to provide a humanitarian response to the so-called refugee crisis. While we situate and conceptualise varied trans and queer struggles as part of this century’s challenges through direct democracy, we are also aware that the assertion of our bodies as transfeminine bodies within such struggles is both necessary and draining. Political work can open us up to forms of damage, even when riot police are out of sight; and the precarity through which we organize does not necessarily entail the possibility of safer spaces.¹⁶

¹⁴ The formulation is offered in the argument made by sex workers that working together offers forms of protection among sex workers.

¹⁵ For a further elaboration of radical transfeminism, formulated as a praxis rooted in agency and oriented towards social and material transformation, see van der Drift and Raha (forthcoming).

¹⁶ Regarding issues around resources for the production of safer spaces, the Radical Transfeminism conference in London deployed an “interactive” and “co-operative” ‘politics of space’ that emphasized differences in experience of oppression and means to support understanding when one’s views are challenged. See Mijke van der Drift, Chryssy Hunter and Nat Raha (2015) ‘Politics of Space’, *Radical Transfeminism Stream, London Conference in Critical Thought*, London, UK, June 26-27 2015, online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/505965509556758/permalink/511009335719042/> (accessed November 2 2016).

5.3 Separations of transfeminine bodies and work

When the lack of air is the cut of the thought that does not refract through another body. On the other side of the Western world I meet a poet. Our conversation tends to a story either of us could have told, with different colleagues or collaborators, different geography, different queer and trans scenes, different bodies of different shifts through land and location. We drop off mailing lists, are absent from the spaces we have helped organize and create. The ideas and critiques of our voices do not carry. The disqualification of our knowledge, suggestions, of creating the time for our involvement, of our work within forms of queer and trans community and cultural spaces – as trans femmes or trans women, or constellating near these descriptions – are the same. We name this phenomenon textbook transmisogyny. But I also think of how Susan Stryker connects the disavowal of our knowledge as being rooted in transfeminine bodies as antinormative bodies to a “more fundamental and culturally pervasive disavowal of intrinsically diverse modes of bodily being as the lived ground of all knowing and of all knowledge production” (2008: 154). Stryker argues that consequently the knowledge of how antinormative bodies are materially affected, and how such material effects transform knowledge, are “delegitimated as merely subjective”, which “circumscribes the radical potential of that knowledge [in] critique...as feminism, communities of color, and third world voices have long maintained” (154). Between the designation of the experiences rooted in transfeminine bodies as “merely subjective” and the disavowal of transfeminine knowledge as a site of knowledge in its multiplicities, the potentiality of our thought – and one might add our work – are circumscribed.

To (at best) be bearers of civil rights and socially or micropolitically disqualified as bearers of knowledge is nothing new. It is nothing new for trans femmes as it is nothing new for people of colour as it is nothing new for women as it is nothing new for migrants as it is nothing new for people with disabilities as it is nothing new for intersex people of various genders. The difference is when we are organizing with fellow queers, fellow trans people, fellow feminists, fellow disabled people; sometimes we hold up the moments when we all get the issue – one person points to it as us all getting the issue that maybe next time only two people in the room will get. But the structure is such that sometimes we're not even in the room (when there are no trans women at your party) or near the politics (when there are no trans women in your feminist community). The disavowal of not only the knowledge of trans women and trans femmes, as Stryker suggests, but also the exclusion of our bodies and the disregarding of the work we undertake, materially and psychically affects those excluded from and included within these rooms. This is the separation of our bodies and work and lives from queer, feminist, and trans world-making projects, which itself is a basic fracturing of such worlds, and the erasure of the poor trans femmes (often of colour) who have inaugurated them – of the names known and now held up: Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, Miss Major. Sometimes we witness the really beautiful spectacle of queer / feminist / of colour community holding up its sisters and siblings, only to be reminded again of our deviance through exclusion. The psychic and emotional impact of this is sometimes too hard to bear, let alone to begin speaking of. Sometimes we are either broken or not too broken such that we can speak to each other (as trans siblings, or queer sisters, among ourselves or to build solidarity across these lines), to build the moment of recognition that something historically specific kept us absent from whatever room it is or was, this or that month. Sometimes this knowledge cascades into

and through our interiors, into accumulating collective, communal bodies. Sometimes the conversation doesn't even begin to cohere this way. Sometimes it doesn't materialize.

5.4 Capital devaluations

I want to connect the epistemological disqualification of the transfeminine body as an antinormative body (in the sense articulated by Stryker) to the material precarity of antinormative bodies in general. The disqualification operating through vectors of transmisogyny, on a micropolitical level, is intimately connected to the devaluation of poor, feminized bodies under capitalism, as detailed throughout this thesis. This devaluation takes place both in regard to one's social position and one's relation to wages. The devaluation of poor, feminized bodies under capitalism is the basis of our brokenness as transfeminine bodies. It is compounded through a racialised and gendered division of labour where poor, feminized bodies and/or of colour – often from or in the Global South – sustain the lives, spaces and desires inhabited by (predominately white, but not exclusively white) privileged, bourgeois bodies in or from the Global North (Federici 2012, Farris 2015 and Aizura 2014). That our transfeminine bodies are barely deemed worthy of affective support either within capitalist society or within anticapitalist queer, feminist and trans community organizing dovetails with our devaluation through this racialised and gendered division of labour. Furthermore, the knowledge that might emerge from the affective struggles considered above, be they individual or collective, is only valued when it is posited in certain, limited forms of narrative (*the* trans narrative) or is contained within narratives of recognition. In the context of trans and gender nonconforming people generally inhabiting the

lower echelons of wage distributions (to think again of our unemployment, underemployment, overwork, boredom and isolation), our position within a racialised and gendered division of labour further circumscribes the radical potential of our knowledge as rooted in antinormative bodies. The dull white collar, service sector, and/or manual work we undertake may entail dissonance, isolation and distress through reification;¹⁷ while work such as sex work faces risks of criminalization and the effects of stigmatization. The distress and precarity surrounding work in both formal and informal economies reasserts a situation of slow death; criminalization may lead to incarceration and deportation while negating one's agency – for instance, Toni Mac shows how multi-agency immigration raids in London work to criminalize migrant workers including sex workers while evacuating their agency before the law.¹⁸ Our labour and such work faces the possibility of the same epistemological disqualification alongside its material devaluation. However, between precarity, reification and the increasing presence of the border, methods of undercommoning (Harney & Moten 2013) might sustain us through difficult emotions, bring moments of affirmation, and steal a few hours back for our living.

If the politics of trans and queer liberalisms is based on the reform of and assimilation into the structures of neoliberal capitalist society, what form of transfeminist politics must be articulated, and through what kind of praxis, in order to turn the tide against such disqualifications and their historical impact? This is also a question of how poor, transfeminine bodies and the bodies of

¹⁷ As considered in Chapter 1, my intention here is to link this formulation to the psychic impact of undertaking labor as *contemplative* activity.

¹⁸ Toni Mac (2016) 'Swoop and Rescue'. *Verso*, October 21 2016. Online at <http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2895-swoop-and-rescue> (accessed December 1 2016).

work we are responsible for have influenced queer, feminist, socialist, anti-racist, decolonial movements of past and present – bodies and work that, next to trans bodies in general, have been and often continue to be rendered invisible in the histories of these movements. As Che Gossett, Tourmaline and AJ Lewis remind us, the work of LGBT politics has always entailed work against police violence, and trans genealogies of Black feminism show that Black feminism has always been trans (2012).

5.5 Labour against genders

The poet Anne Boyer likes my tweet about the temptation to write this chapter entirely on public transport as a (creative/necessary) constraint. The fabric of queer and trans social reproduction surrounds the space between this writing. The poet (not Anne, yours truly) must leave her house to write, as her desk is currently occupied by her second job. The fabrics of social reproduction—of domestic space and the forms of queer feminist sociality—are the garments in which the trans femme is dissatisfied, under-supported, unable to clasp and contain the negativity of her emotions. The waged and caring labours she undertakes leave too little time for dressing to express that carefully constructed self associated with stereotypical narratives of transition.

Sometimes the work she undertakes works against her gender. She finds herself undertaking men's work, or feminized office work in which trans does not signify. Some days she is a communist spy writing academic papers on stolen time, smiling at customers as she greets them, serving them lunch. The precarity of her waged work dovetails with the precarity of her gender expression.

Her lovers may be the arms of healing, unsure how best to hold her, arms of few arms. Her chosen lovers or johns may fetishize or abuse her. She will capture intimate moments among those she can trust as a sister or sibling, to unravel toxicities, toxic masculinities, the odours of transmisogyny and sexism. It is these moments of violence that hurt deeply, the concert of romantic ideology, the trans woman as scapegoat (Serano 2007), scarce life under capital. It is here where every tone of voice transgressing a felt gender, or supposed gender, may be used against us. Where the gender norms cohering around the colour of our flesh and the char of the garments, where our love or our breathing may end.

5.6 Cultivating transfeminist worlds

October 2016: in Glasgow, we hear Tourmaline.¹⁹ In a discussion titled ‘life in flight from every prison’ – part of *Refuse Powers’ Grasp* arts and politics festival organized by Arika, where we hear Tourmaline [Reina Gossett], Miss Major, Che Gossett, Dean Spade, Eric Stanley, Kai Lumumba Barrow, Joshua Allen, Sondra Perry, Juliana Huxtable, members of We Will Rise, Mujeres Creando, SCOT-PEP and the English Collective of Prostitutes, among others – Tourmaline speaks of five aspects of oppression. She identifies isolation as one of these aspects. This resonates with the hearts and lungs of the trans women and trans femmes in the room—at least, those friends I compare notes with after the discussion. Joshua Allen ties this isolation to scarcity, its condition in the contemporary United States, how Black trans excellence

¹⁹ Arika, *Refuse Powers’ Grasp*, Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland, October 21-23 2016. Those named in this section are the voices that build the discussions in this and the next paragraph of the chapter.

[#blacktransexcellence] can thrive despite the systems working against such life (these systems prevented trans prison abolitionist CeCe McDonald from getting her passport in time to be in this particular room). Tourmaline suggests that there is no healing sometimes, that recovery from certain wounds is neither possible nor necessarily desirable. We hear to be wary of the appropriation and individualization of self-care. We know there is no self-care without the production of self and care; and that we cannot live without our lives.²⁰ Later we hear Dean Spade who points again to isolation and ties it to our social deskilling, sometimes through too much living online. With Tourmaline chairing this discussion, the question becomes what forms of mutual engagement break isolation and cultivate care. The isolation in question is explicitly that of incarceration in jail, but also of isolation within (and from) communities, with an undercurrent of the atomization of capitalist life described by Debord (1970).

Mijke van der Drift and I discuss over the next few days (and over days that are yet to follow) how the cultivation of care enacted in the spaces we inhabit this particular weekend visibly resonates through various trans (of colour) and feminine bodies. When conversations turn difficult, we sense moments of disagreement, frustration, in the bodies of friends current and new; these bodies remove themselves momentarily, physically from the space or psychologically into an interior, to be brought back into and supported through discourse in the measured, calculated manners of critical speech. These feel like new bases for

²⁰ *We cannot live without our lives* as a phrase was penned by Barbara Deming and is the title of her 1974 book (New York: Grossman Publishers). With the prefix of '3rd World Women', the phrase was used on a banner by women in Boston marching to protest of the murders of Black women in the city in 1979. The phrase has also more recently been used to title conversations around trans prison abolition involving Tourmaline, Che Gossett, CeCe McDonald, Dean Spade and Eric Stanley.

articulations of mutual support, of abolitionist work within the everyday – here an everyday of public, activist speech, as Tourmaline says, of prefiguring the world we want to live in.

If at times healing may neither be possible nor desirable, we instead work at the cultivation of care and mutual support that inaugurates a more liveable world and calls for the transformation of the material conditions that fracture and break us, conditions structured against the sustenance of poor, transfeminine people / of colour and of poor, feminized people / of colour more generally. Checking in, comparing notes, collectivizing lunch and dinner, bringing bodies back into conversations and spaces, keeping tabs on what kind of interactions might bridge fractures in social structure, and which interactions might graze. We work ourselves out of the liberal myths of enfranchisement and the exceptionalisation of struggles. Trans liberalism might alter our sense of enfranchisement in the West, but rights will reaffirm the sense of law by which certain bodies of certain genders, races, nationalities, abilities and religions deserve the right to live in a world owned and managed by so few people; this falls far short of establishing a sustainable basis for world-making through the co-production of care, in which trans people might be centred alongside other marginalized people. We radically revise our individualized histories and experience into a collective understanding built through our particulars, to understand that our individual struggles, the embedding of sadness, the negative affects we turn inward toward our bodies, are about the absence of a sustainable immediate world within which we could really reside.

The dialectic of struggle against a world that breaks us, and for the inauguration of a world of mutuality and support where we can begin to live and thrive is always in progress, pushing the work of transformation below the

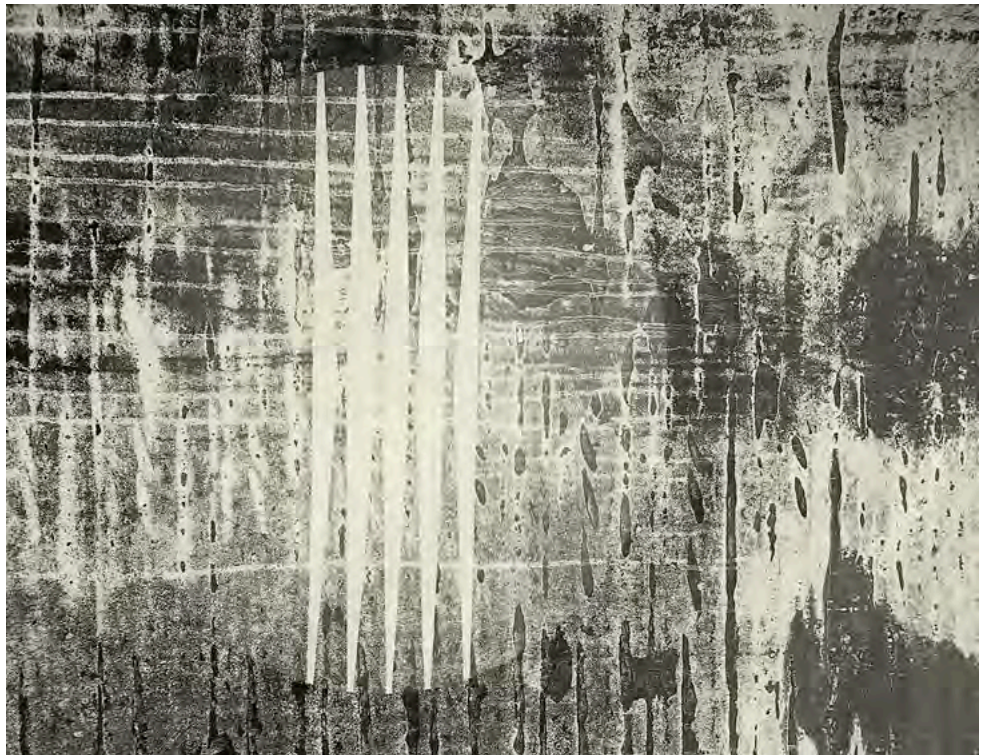
visible surface of neoliberal capitalist society. It is in the moments of dailiness which feel im/possible that the co-production and autonomous support of thought and feeling and work in and through our bodies pushes back against contemporary divisions of labour, epistemological disqualifications, precarious work, devalued wages and strain of passport controls; where social reproduction and solidarity delay slow death, psychic strain, and/or deportation. If we might be fractured through the accumulation of such negative conditions, qua the contemporary accumulation of capital, we also know that the work, support and histories that might transform them are buried and disqualified as ourselves – which need to be unearthed, teased out and held up.

of sirens / body & faultlines

*"my teacher says there are more walls in england than in berlin, johnny.
what were we to do in those crumbling acres [...]?"*

~Derek Jarman, The Last of England (1987)

radio / threat



take treat out of day's mediate :
 the bmp of our clothes
 interact down / thin vague of energetics to
 gauge of residential
 internet mediate / dangles barest strip of your
 known speech && throw
 locate sickness stable
 by vibrations
 of floorboards reflects the
 cheek-direct, it is the
 coldest year in the city
 / subject-disparity masked the apparition of social belonging
 & days lacking beauty of anyone / wanted to
 drain my monologue / hours
 in peace of subjectivity evol'd
 from dissonant body
 / nomad trauma / partial-hang in subcultures, known
 imperative / bring 'morrow's

intensity-siren connect street to corneas / timescale
 imbedded , beside the
 glare vicious of fun peoples /
 tense /
 in wh... we l...

drench / worn less verbose through
 procurement of rest w/ owned hours:
 embedded; spring cut to look quiescent by
 neo-beauty / of political necessity:
 to shred exclusions in relationals logic
 / tangible under duress
 / shield eyes from mem. / shield graze of audio



smiles electronics for the border
force great walls of dover,
heathrow & stansted, tax animate
xenophobe in the
private security form / detention
theresa may neocolonial marionette,

apourosity of borders for labour / blood
phantasm that the human denied to follow / the
regulation of the senses as collateral to capital
deregulation, the administration : illegal
mobilisations against 'illegal' bodies, perpetual
dream realised in kettled touch, the common
in action ukba –which has been abolished–
 & golden dawn / bombed out
HQ / vomit national front sloganeering / *tell*
them you do not want to talk to / NO
ANSWERS a wall of resistance necessities of
contemporary everyday / scab
reports new asian family in street [1986 cf.]
// landlords of soho &
peckham , absent birdsong by traffic smog AM
new cross road , alarm/ing peace / walworth
feelings on the street today □ the
heirs of london & windsor, the people's
republic of south london, district insurrections
& dreams / to which we might migrate——

cf. crumbled wage half-life / experimental employment, standards
of living instants taking selves -BLANK- ‘cross waterloo
westminster bridges & home, arms giving in rooms inefficient
in poems written as labour theft / the
being of government, consciousness &
 will financial,
borders closure raised trafficking, the will of
human subjects global attempts at survival
social determinates / *imfwuz here* / the emptying intellectual
blinker facing appearance justifying the austere,, & i
homewards from supermarket / sustenance seek the
helicopter looking up bourgeois st. new cross a dog
dragging teeth out of a black 'suspect'
arm spurred by met dozen
monday PM we
listen to the property screaming & you
are outside the jean charles de menzies memorial, stockwell &
texting sad
 & I hear the face of david cameron he is a two-tone
house alarm it is autumn & warm the seasons deranged, the names of
future bourgeoisie, the cries & calming of royal children,
steps in a capital tourism to derelict / modern rot,

source-funds 'art
means business solutions'
the years since artists thought/had
to burn down the city //

(police dream)

day's cuffs / saturate content of subcognate, *just*
a dream in my ~~##~~

police formations replaced prime hour cultural
 aliens /television saturday, to clampline neoliberal apparatus
 sections our demo forms :: the opposition of anti-fascists
 denoted clear in hours of ~~our~~

document / fixed electronic
 south east border towns /
 debit cards & private ability
 assessments --

our potentials in the

language of totalitarian computers,
 domestics precarious in the undercut, ukba
 enforcement in lewisham, billboards & cinematic
 imperialism / abnegation

of male faces in the smug wet
 / petal of the shard workday 7.11P.M. spectral officer formations
 of night hours wails fixed into & from our throats ~~##~~ secure
 underground stations & canteens, strip vitality sonics
 saturated city space protest w/ capital fuzz investment, the
 english defence against tower hamlets, dead radio signals
 news channels, negating state violence / class & migrant
 history, the pale arms of

rupert murdoch / rhetoric identical outstretched
 evening silent drains of custody blood, deskilled
 contemplative possibilities in common words
 abandoned flags of royalist / ketamine, multi-brand
 made in britain / ready-to-wear exports kettles
 nerve gas, the great fires of brixton & tottenham, the
 police kidnapped at cable st / investment capital theft
 , reversals of the everyday ~~##~~ dispersal bailed
 winter since 1979 //

~~##~~ action absolute now

wealth harmonics ~~///~~ negative series

:: 'british' jobs mythology, a history of
global blood & appropriation; consider
who now severing the workmind /
feasting economic / funds public
handed corporate ; the

unemployed reserve mutated to latent 'workers' shocks

frantic & starvation quote "looking for

yr future potential state productive

equates = £70pw 'wage' (sic) 'free'

insert sur jubilant dictates morality
deployed typical ref. business practice

ian duncan messiah weekly that

vulnerability will force 'productive'

descend job cathedral / birdsweet
cavorts by echo of sirens, wage lie, lie food bank
lie jcp vulture hoard ~~///~~ bomb fetish ;; or

deported, the value & investment in

/ migrant hate tory pr salaries

&/or tabloid editors the

£figure that can be transformed into social fear

operating against the recognition of agency

& material need cf. acts of insolent british

citizenry / that the

increase of migrant workers necessarily

sources profit accumulation it is the

2015 general election {#} QUESTION 16: the words

'britain', 'british isles' or 'british', however, are used

in this test to refer to everyone in A)

england B) the corporation's city of london C)

serco yarl's wood detention centre

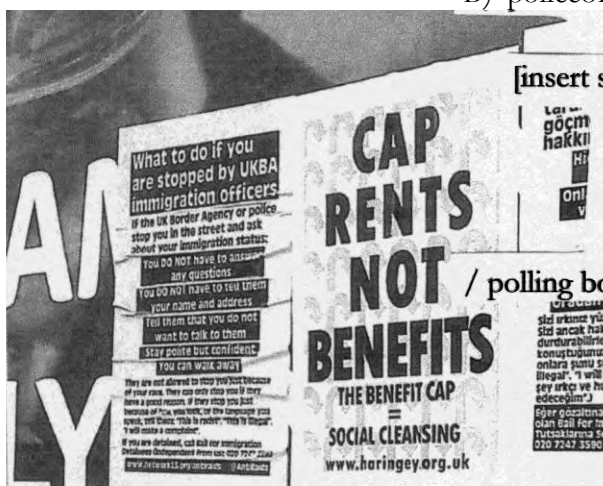
D) policeofficer at door ~~///~~

= spectral theresa may

[insert surveillance] the

lyric you of television ~~///~~ you &/or
descendents of empire windrush passengers,
cavorts to democratic violence
in pronouncements of inverse

/ polling booth myth absolute



= financiers queuing to enter parliament radio
 4 air dead of eastern economies & difference
 / all economies are negative histories bodies
 & lived exploitation relative
 to the word 'fair' in all mouths

~~is~~ impossible beliefs of liberalism here
 in the 21st century when we do not exist &/or suffer

the modern legal system is not for saving you

in absolute solidarity with CeCe McDonald

limit for static

change in assignment,

registered to throes of bureaucracy: that

protected characteristics

cf. status quo conservational

society inc., mythologies

where privilege of a/recognisable common sex is

unrecognised as privilege,

whose being

does legislation represent?

whose disclosure to

the bounds

white classed liberalism,

the false grails of the free in ties

& employment, beside the colour of the

same in employment

difference slated to 'the same as but',

with fear or something---; reproducing

the scene of happily //-til she

blood cut a fascist with her labour tools,

state oriented against intervention, of the necessity

to exist still in the AM, // 'cept the sanction

of good / of

socially-necessary incarceration/ dear

CeCe speak / feeling beside the '*can*'

/ not by list of our

trans* collective global loss / break

the pillars / amnesiac ≠

burying the ribbon & its referents

≠ deviance struck off the // official

history of civil rights according us freed =

compelled through the prohibitions

[july 2013]

made a promise for a ¬ commodity excess / infatuate

antimonies salvate

institute in dabble health / poetics

/ contemplative

bureau-rational transformed into the every

day in our trying to sell labours /

art negative to public life / industrial creativity / buyer first time

percentage debt allocation,

service of dead publics aggressive

mugs closest, my ¬ inverted pleasantries english

take / good will / *victim out of* / extracted from concept / “*we*

apologise for the / theft of hours prior / *made a*

victim stretched through sad / resentful to & fro by

train to families / priced against

possible pleasure take / sediment hurt yours

fractures the looking calm forward

service taken to taunt / stress

/ debilitate weeks

⊠ invisible domains of price felt by increase in sweat

/ anxiety fret chemical downtrod *victim* self

perfect rational of simplicity / *due to today's busy*

individual / & you feel you can

drained vitals & the arms &

mind left to give / to others our

kisses from the foot of workplace , pre-

exchanged for wage / ~~my working~~ sensory trauma in the

need of service *induced manipulate* ∓ feeling relational to the

opacity of produce / comprehension at the fetish dam *where*

the future's not ¬ withdrawn out of the palm, for / profit

vindicates the necessary, the possible dull

strange infatuate in the high st, burnt coffee

chain visuals ¬ shark service self-exchanged ¬ wallet

overdraw,, in use to reach the social &/or

subsistence struck through secrete misery, what / emerge to

hour / object's material hit hectic on present toward self-

distain nerves fret to life in

normal missed on inact false false

advance zero privatised hurt hit the¬

~~###~~ your value indication from
 experienced poor *high street*
bank crime ripping
 the private austere *your personal*
 national debt fragment / gorged
 derivatives ~~###~~ here in
 london SE *this / atm will soon*

permanently out of service 27th
september 2013 your nearby / “spectral
objectivity” / contained in false
standard / “calling local bank to keep
appendage to a desire of growth

untranslated to dirham to pound
 circulates *to the heart of*
 >>*lie to my friends*
 sun hung freeze hands of personified
 >>*street with the white financial* kidnap bankers
 that the wharf parasitic eyeshot / line nook
 nightby old kent rd / that our local mutates
 ≠ mutates new trains mutates w/ popular
 haunts / commercial tucked bourg. urban
 transplant valley hollar outdoor untitled
 ex-shopfront that they started to superbia / hit
 mechanical history / started to
~~[#]~~ supermarket // that *your estate agent* / 2nd in
 peckham, which belongs to none of us;
 that they rack us by our leased shacks &&
 season of crisis produced over human

THE MARRIAGE OF GEORGE OSBORNE & IAIN DUNCAN SMITH
(epithalamion)

“George Osborne, god of love, we have spurned beauty –” ~ Sean Bonney (2011: 21)

conservative love = the absolute colonisation
of the social senses.
political sedation
bestows the being-subject onto partial us,
impelled stakeholders. queer life privatised
in a moment of
subcultural needs / surplus on the
back of affective provision, where our
qualitative use of the marriage-form
is legitimate only
through its exchange-yield;
where our possible love is depoliticised
as multicultural inclusivity girded from
bone capital/
where LG(bt__) is a series of summerskills linear
w/ new norms i.e. acronym sold to close down
content / we extrapolated to financed change
that negates us / bodies known through markings for
happiness-as-refugee in the fetish trait,
between the vow-thing & the
happily ever consumed ;
there is no talk
of fucking here.
the marriage-form
weds economic selfhood
freshly denies racial / gendered
/ sexual / disabled / unemployed abject,
negated from perspectives as scrounger–
i.e. get married or get deported;
the crowd taught to only sight normal/other:
the congregation is a pride parading to social conformity
/ g.a.p.-ad happily sold not to stitch
/ comprehensively spent regulate / the cruelty corporate
liberal gay optimism inflicts on under-subjects
/ the happy coupleformal neoliberalated
through active material hate;
no compare to material inequality, 1/4
homeless youths still queer, of trans* subjects

sutured to disclosure in the name of right:
 our gendered beingness extra-legal, of the
 strictured possibility within administered
 thought & the felt / boundary
 stray to political lockout / insufficient investment /
 capital-legit sociality negates the necessary of divergence.

GEORGE: lo! the wishèd day is come: we
 announce the latest action to secure recovery;
 that shall pinkwash the gays to usury of long delight:
 that we value marriage *socially* and *financially* &
 doe ye to usury of joy & privatised sexual pleasure sing,
 on the back of material cleansing to which all
 must answer with all its social consequences, & its
 ring that I give to you, Iain, as a symbol of my love,
 choosing to bestow austerity with you.

all gays with garlands goodly well, buy
 this union
 as image, public-corporate for my fayre love,
 of wealth and endless things

& goodly *all* agree with sweet consent, to this
 commodity celebration of coupled norm. hark!
 how the cheerful gays chant of marriage's praise,
 their recuperation in this world, fundamentally fair

fair Austerity! shew forth thy vicious ray
 and let thy lifull heat fervent be,
 for burning the scrounger beings &
 welfare state, with fresh lusty-hed, go
 to the bowre of my beloved love; we enforce
 on our public three principles: growth, reform
 and sick fairness— ascending british enterprise
 & economic culture it needs

 to win the global
 race in honour of capitalism; making sure we
 are all in it together;

now is my unending love all ready forth to come
 in unbroken circulation: let this day, like all,
 be myne; let all the rest bequeathed to you, Capital;
 the which the base affections doe obey,
 and yield their services unto your will;
 once seene your celestial, unrevealèd pleasures,
 wrought by your own hand, then *all*
 do wonder, and its praises sing:

spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
 and in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
 from fear of crises let no dread disquiet once
 annoy the safety of our privilege; pour
 your blessing on us plenteously, & your
 happy influence upon us reign—
 that we may raise a large surplus
 through the earth that you do long purchase
 saturated with market-grown happiness

DAVID CAMERON: bless O Capital, that
 Iain and George bequeath, may they ever
 abide in thy transformations, together
 in privileged unity, love, and happiness, amen.

GEORGE: Iain, conjunct to all desired lending, I
 join our lives to this economic plan, of a
 downsized state, minor democratic, of private needs
 material, emotional, political, to be
 its partner in life. to honour you &
 not let the poor leech upon us through their sickness
 & in health, nor other undeserving subjects:
 migrants with their mischievous, numerous childs
 they shall pay £3000 to enter our empire;
 NOR the disabled, whose need we sense not;
 let no lamenting queers, nor the dolefull jobless,
 pour foule horror on the pleasures that thee, Capital,
 wrought, honest and faithful they must turn up
 with a CV and look for work & only after the seventh
 day shall they receive the minimum amount of money
 the law requires for life;
 & the number of persons working for our public, esp.
 women & northern folk, shall fall
 by 144,000 in our next years of happiness & health
 & we are to remove automatic pay rises simply
 for time served to this public & these
 are consequences of public investment; & those
 who do not utter thoughts in our language must speak
 it or we shall not pay them.

 plebs! go to your wonted labours this day
 is expensive; we plague thee
 with the greatest unfairness
 & we dub this progressive government
 w/ the pledge to plague thee today,
 tomorrow, and always.

IAIN: & George! my love, of applecheeks which the
banks hath corroded, I promise to join my life to your
counter-terrorism budget, that we may cut Muslims
from our biggest society, & having severed the equality
& human rights commission budget by 76% our love shall
grow sustainable enterprise through others' sickness
and in health, especially the disabled
who shall be reformed back to work through common
personal independence payments & quantitative outsourced
health checks which shall eliminate tens of thousands of
pounds/persons; & we shall universalise them
& the underserving poor to workfair for 30hrs pittance,
& end all legal aid to the austere crises'd ordinary subject
whose demolished life quality will forever be

their responsibility

& cut £11.5bn from our public's tax purse that
shall disproportionately free the ourselves
& the richest, who have already purchased
on credit the marriage commodity here
in the city of westminster, its 20 year ad campaign:
abject parody / commodity-form equality, a fused
community of enforced economic interests
rightfully into which

all homos may crawl, beauty bestowed
from democracy corp., through these difficult times of
happiness and sorrow, all the rest of their lives.

GEORGE: my right honourable love
arysing forth to run their mighty race, clad all in white
some angell Iain had beene. he has
comprehensively won the national debate about
welfare, his balding head alike melted tight
currency, vacant eyes debase the poor, countenance
enraged that they

thieve his handouts, fayre man
garnisht w/ privilege's beauty! glorious w/ corporate love!
now available as rights-based sacrosanct
ceremonies that it may produce & sell

such endless matrimony

DAVID: why blush ye, ministerial loves, at its exchange-value
give to me

your hand in its pledge
never had men more joy then this///

in newsprint *defenders of marriage say the darnest things*, yet
their fantasies are negatively realised as our

impoverished everyday. NO PARTIES. NO PEACE.
QUEERS: PRIDE IS NOT OURS. ORGANISE.
FIGHT BACK. ACT UP.
SCREW NEOLIBERATION:
START A REVOLUTION.

[june 2013]

(affective dialectics: second treatise)

*[“and am not good at
being immobile*

*in Paris I could dance
like I used to dance
but at first my body
kept falling over*

~ Anna Mendelssohn]



~ Verity Spott

/ history,

smash the schism of participation & control :

free speech as the mythic conditions

encourage an empowered belief, that only

escalation may fulfil

February – March 2013

our dismount peaceful
constitutes the illegality
that our kiss no longer historically represents
, we
potential demo-form,
microsize in claim /
where what we may come to know feeds from
the totality which
in this organ respires
/ academic
industrial complex (the latest in series)
besides
provisions / horsemeat-equivalent
/ falsified pleasure beverage from its hand
of exchange driving the body of anonymised
worker / secure previous / declined
value-operative / nutrition supply crisis /
when such sense could
thrill further e.g.
the crêperie-conditional /

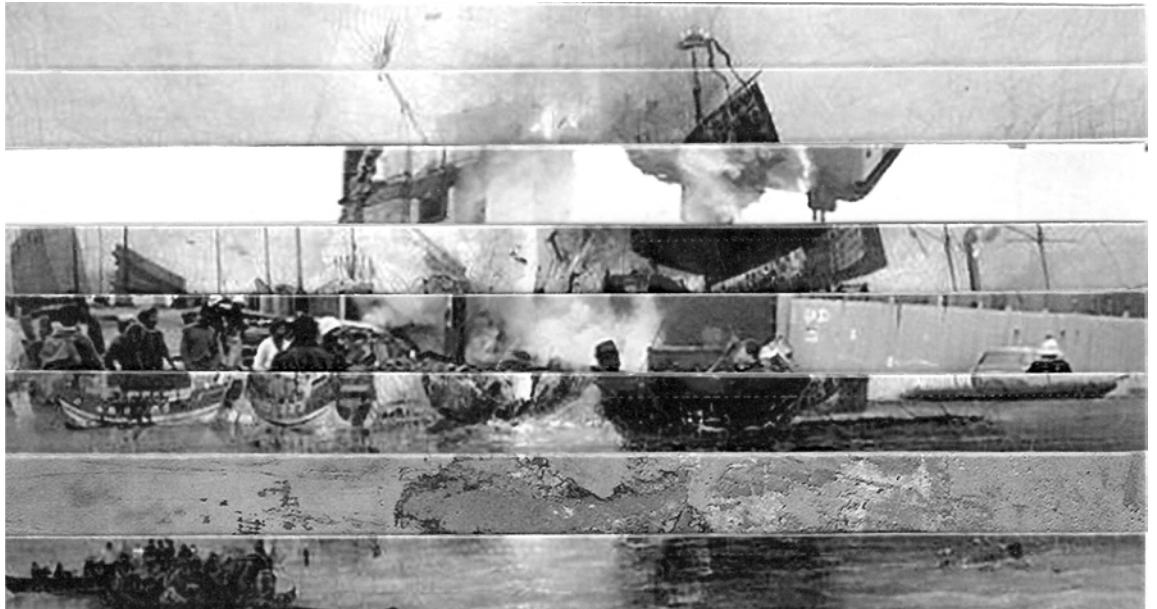
southern clarity draws 'cross heads of us
in spring's pull / clear air to ears by
care early / bestowed kind to shoulder lips weighing
mutual
in radicalism / of necessary
body politic as site of knowing
divergent
& dissonant, occurs
that joy / push in
give off other may
better when sensed / fought condition
splits abstract the play of its tunes,
act transitional happiness, *cf.*
duffy looming
conceptions / of control
/ concrete barricade,
as our yellow starts to erase
equity in the site they forbid assembly
legal maintenance of the imaginary
slips, along w/ surplus
of the cellular house

its daily thought-corrupt
 to drone by
 beautiful implements & pans
 no peace : brace dynamic,
 the everyday orchestrated
 directly towards praxis, reclaiming
 the order of
 public autonomy / forcing leeches from intellect its
 exorcist smoke-signal
 / as for-profit security & bootshine riotpigs
 numerous strip
 accounts fed from tuition
 exec power
 unwriting
 edu-capital

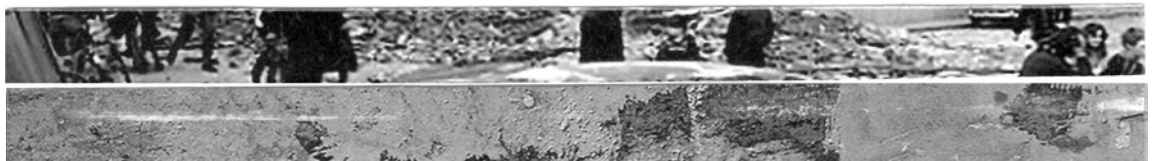
 / && I / in /
 desire / engulfing embodied sensate as
 you / direct response
 cuts to core the
 violence of state apparatus
 servicing contemporary / mutant institution
 completely objectifies units that move to materialise / the
 educational macroeconomic / gash across torso of my school / bloodlet
 official historical / unable to perceive e.g. the absolute failure
 of equality that you hector :
 that they blurt across
 consent / disclosure
 of the health in heads
 to threat
 educational access
 responded w/ their further
 ableist absolute failure of equal opps
 relative, severing the
 body's ground, of health too divergent
 for the institution to value the hold,
 // cut of
 & our lucid shade, driving the course
 of the qualitative out from us-object
 trying to hold desire
 & our drive to shut down the organ that feeds & grinds cognitives,
 in exchange figuring US as exchange
 where we are simultaneously
 elephantine blank.

privileging frame of imperial england / corpses rational built
 from the hands engaged to labours / multitude
 quality-reduced figures // the bonfire
 drawing back from the contradiction / exploit /
 drains energy from lips I
 long for you to give / shoulders
 weary w/ institutionalised ableism /
 engaged constructive to
 tarnish clear sheen of
 equality failed /// & the
 bless of / lost to talk & creativity
 toward necessities to dine / that we
 might give to kitchen collective / movement / that
 understands the problem of work &
 constitution / varied alliance / that could be drawn
 through syndicate //
 to swerve / reactivate history
 as attack / a carriage for
 the administration / smash our
 further freezing, must
 disrupt the concrete social capital drives / against
 consumption to claim power / objects
 us & the
 possibility of further thought.

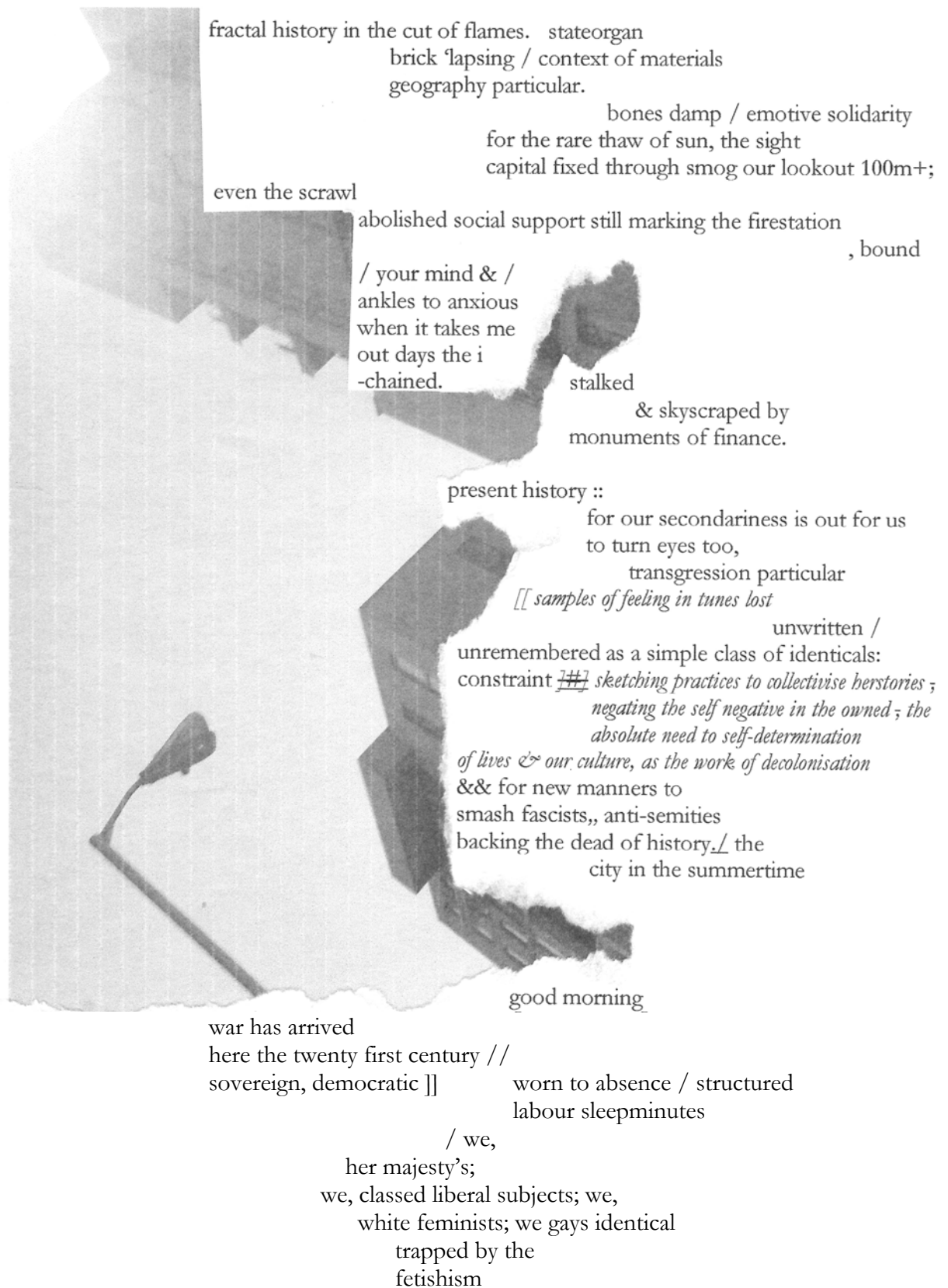
[of sirens / body & faultlines]



[of sirens / body & faultlines]



(a fire)



charge of the gentry.
scenes of pollutant song & short

eyes, concentrations
increasing white bodies dispersed
early hours, new cross road:
where we've held out in the try collective of us
to construct a wedge stable, of permanence: we
so broken out of belonging together
, root & rubble piling upon action to bruise, to be
thrown only back into privacy

/ landlord behest::
sick w/ increase on values, the
suffering of our friends
/ this exact their
dream of estates, contemporary
good life / magazine pleasure
“all profit is identical to exploitation

“defences 'gainst the transformations: speculative
values, wage distributions / vague opportunes,
news orchestrating semblance of growth. the
false universal

faultline our concepts of home,

early restrained 'cross the head to
wear
/ to give care & joy
to you under thatcherite architecture

„ bliss of contemporary
draining the nerve / when
we will need to hold, extremities
of feeling, / stress of
inaction / hierarchy of the land
onto ~~us~~ ~~[[& me,~~
~~with residence~~

, affection & sense exact
to conditions of the age & market &
fear newsfray / / entertains mind
/ mode to takeout night hours. if
communication w/
their world conditions
of days,, sever;
stable toxicity ones zeros minutes caffeine
drained.

to just for / rest in the ends

& be w/ selves [:] disintergrate
 workplace projections the
 / infinite astral

counterhistories:

the condition of the workforce 6.21pm; 11
 .08am job centre of violence eminent. state
 to save tensions &
 dress of fears
 to secure through grey in the daily, transports
 etc. that this always more partial –
 than the supposed / givenmodes life ;; that
 fret draining from eyes from back musculate
 & limbs ** each hour
 being,, encouraged
 out of our memory
 officiated & shaking hands w/ reward :
 as thefuture days free from the wage
 decline w/ the wage itself// art effacing

blocks demolition that house the we
 repeated from invisibility, the experts of collision
 & coverage

autumn in august corp.
 infatuating on the health
 of us / the value of sickness, the
 plasma of friends in youths;

neocon bridging into dreamstates perspire
 & try to // nerve rest extracted behind eyes.

reactionary fiscal

 action to
 erase rebellions of youth,

 to move from dispossession is to not be free,
 to chain in exploitation the
 production of security, food;;

 break this basis / volume kind
 repairing heads that bare daily
 / that we must enable our
 possible action / that every government
 on the globe will fail again this today / install
 fear on prey finance, the
 bourgeoisie chased from brixton village.

how for militancy to half such pleasureseeking
 the decline in quantities sustenance afforded

 // predictions of survival

 / to terrify the circulation of pounds

~~//~~ the future according to urban capital

vapourfear phone tap threaded

, keeps the sovereign entertain
-ed /secure
& the movement of papers

of future hunger & workhouses
of persons overdosed on the
everyday;

good morning, racist toxicity

time disintegrate reading the newsprint *cf.*

that thought on the justice of your life : freedom as

privilege reflect/delivered

in the law's tongue „ if the

policy *bodystate contained to standardised

requirements /descend into hell /camberwell 20.14

hrs ;

the news is our daily bread, gives us momentum

, provides orientation,

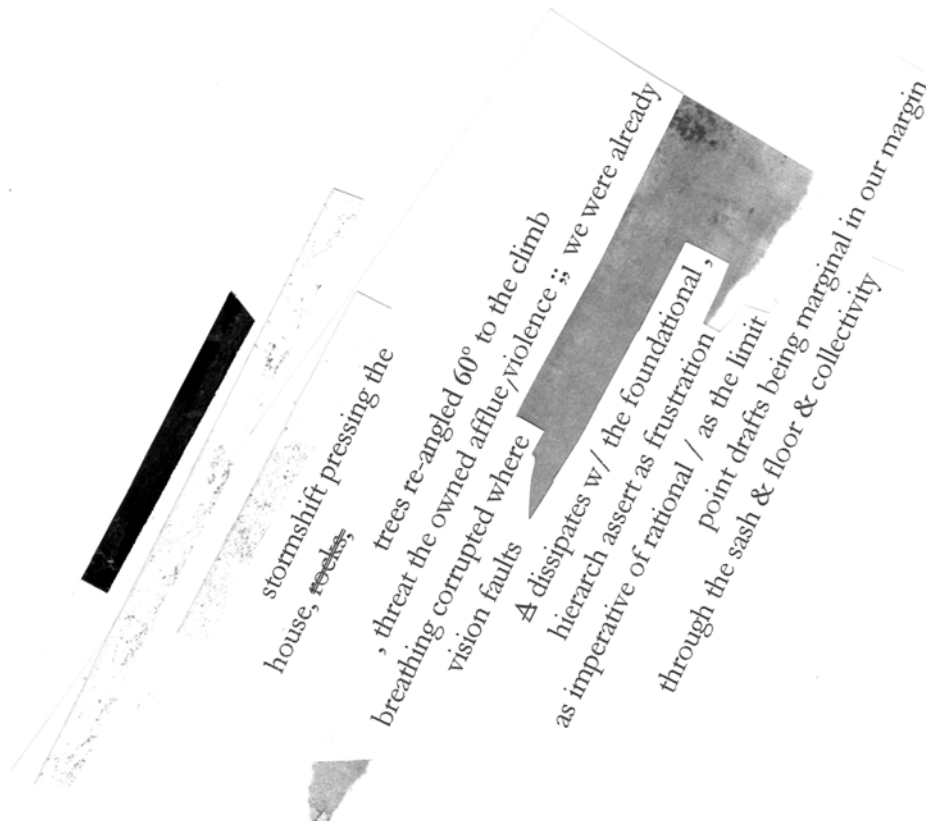
sensation personified

persecution; poverty, torture : contemporary imperialist accord
of human rights / finance aspirational to

have never dreamt the fence, Guantanamo

the negation that keeps the democracy clean.

[august 2014]



< backline >

before stretch tide momentary clasped to waking / curl
of arms kind unclothed on side slight curve

shouldering downward your line
takes breath moment < * > defeats italian futurism / h. moore-ish more homo-flex
as your waist tucks to round

the hip, postures struck our crook

& noted pull intimate $\neg **$

limbs „ conscious of the worn fibre

/ musculature below

/ ribcage on both

// sides , thorax trialled months prior to the

swell of company; ;

/// difference pertains to physicality

⊃ beside medical shifts & wears;

constellate all of the above

&& the cut of you :: relational

& mind & curls & action

& the A.M before the worked day here south of the city ;

relative

to the line yours to claim breath,, i offer self to cup

(poem announcing the end of england)

on the occasion of sick order & separation
 , papers
 rabid w/ future according to corp.:
 stultified peoples known as the english
 , epidemics of national conservatism
 , freetrade publics &
 service / borders wretched keep
 calm & ~~carry~~ ← colonial ghost ;;
 our sickness , downriver sold & quantified to
 the TTIP. in 2015 \
 with all ships &
 symbols of order
 charred, vendettas of the middle
 ages, tearing the
 brick / reign barricades
 westminster, of monuments demolished,
 speech signatures & corpse tories, fascists
 & centrist tendencies: we /
 to hail the end of official history. in waking
 / destruct semblance of the democratic,
 the extractions from our bones pronounced as the new week, positive
 witness \ stupor & individual interest,
 home owned & other aspirations//
 a comedy of damnation
 & erasure of the countryside

AUTOPROCLAIM [::]

:: we none will be saved by weathering & climate's end

[september 2014]

>> street with the white financial kidnapper banks

second split
 of all fireworks looping / saturate
 entire sky compliment w/ every
 siren bright to
 point of tearing all ears &
 eyes enlightenment
 . you turned to thank
 offering , obscured constitution
 of minds, bloods, limbs charred
 , an image for digital
 friends / rats myth as equal
 owners ground rivers knee-skimmed viral
 mutated official hygiene brand
 now they took your name & flagged , so
 happy in the minor distribution
 of warmth \\ season abolished the soil
 abolished, radiation-free ocean abolished,
 economic democracy
 beautiful in yur passport headshot entry in
 paleness destin-
 ations of vitality / descent the
 traffic according to theresa
 may *'cut by*
 drowning at sea'
 k-hole politik to point of sharing where
 all essential intention & contradiction
 are outside the click of understanding,
 glam ancient react to grow
 up in progress & happy keep
 the global south enchained

(shoes, danube)



placing out the ankle, still

'pæft sight widening

such of history upon the limbs of you

/ teetering i

out of spectators consciousness

second unreal glazed to heart that

the poem weak to catch

cinematic

&

freeze near

tears

before we know who, where

yous were taken from .

all liquid erasure

clocks, economies of empire

/ colour negative truth

love : necessity : anti-fash :

& the value of all boots here 1944 - '14

- prehistory / our stomachs

curl w/ relay televisual rocket another

palestinian house collapsed, continued

the long twentieth century

„ my eyeslide & accumulate /

laid 'cross generations we are

retelling to days of us, arms as

a case

wrapped quiet / 'til we

instigate politics

echo out immediate universe

/ its frail coherences. grasped

for preservation / memory ground out

, churning

emotives :: what we can

gain in space & archive /#

amnesiac quotidian & demolition

[july 2014 / march 2015]

bronz & you 35mm
holding rag

abolition of future wealth
abolition of poverty

poverty

pulled from
 ease ~~¶~~ slumber
 red in eyes &
 rubbish of workdreams, new
 cross road sirens unmarked, GEO vans & sun
 -flowers
 smogthroat waft, the years less
 desperate only through the replacement of people
 class glean slight on
 salary % toward at home / begun
 / felt in our sickness \diamond recognition / dismayed

 in september heat the
 gravity on bodies misspelling
 bored orders of day / atms [atmospheres] casual
 normativity reified to the end of the new world
 order *¶all gather round to bear your side*
of things as our action torch against gaslit languages,
 memories, as precarity invests
 in the reciprocal of archives our guts,
 nerves, health, abstraction & belonging
 the erasure of days, *¶ sorry we are so nice to*
 you do not
 understand
 liberalism as global blood // tsunami
 for offices, parliamentary &
 luxury to be erected on the old kent road
 ¶¶ what are you afraid of

of the production of scorched earth &

demolition / expropriate
 , rubble & drones
 borne & fear &
 newsprint as capital , / the

discussion tends / state to
 speak w/ is dominate &

limit ground / sea

as to survive escape

, a politics life

against displacement & killing-as-

gain,, negate the falseground right wing

✱ wealth as fear-capital / parliament sq.

on fire / railton

road, sw2 as domestic barricade

territorial support invest
 duty to render derelict / agent sonics
 condensed order screech cross
 subcognate / opinion unelect

1981 april 11th

to point of trueecho
 protect / digest / into home

8.37pm ambient deptford high street
 direction keep pavements locally stopped
 & racialised 8.50pm siren new
 ✱ cross road conditional keeping cranes
 cuff-to-death threat heist
 the daily & prosper

✓spective patrol of state
 investment stilling

necessary the austere 3.40am approx the
 police stations of the city

suspensions in/ordinate 10
 .42pm cut rest GN14 DWD 9.22
 am start sirens unmarked new
 cross road follows FT63 NYA
 9.25 unmarked, sirens follows GY63

YPZ 9.28 sirens unmarked escort south east
 old kent 9.39am three riot vans old kent south
 east / east street
 DZ62 WZE lewisham way 4.01pm DZ11
 OZY 9.18 unmarked EA63 EEL unmarked
 old north west kent DN11 9.32 unmarked

6.30 unmarked unmarked north west new cross
 road 9.25 marked sirens east new cross road
 patrol south amersham white male 8.33 patrol
 amersham white female hour unrecorded 9.28
 sirens marked east new cross road marked two
 9.23 motorbikes marked way riot van nor
 west lewisham 9.35 19/11/2014
 three riot vans west 9.29 CK63 XMT 9.25
 visible left sirens onto pagnell 6.53 LC13 EVA
 7.32 unmarked siren -ing 9.19am 3 uniformed
 AXC 613 DXY



(2) As for swindling in the East India trade,
longer drawn because commodities have
commodities sold in order to draw bills which could be discounted

our archives of health, abstraction
& belonging / precarity, sirens
of work & body & home

~~≠~~ consider the boss as virus attached
tissue / muscle, our agony

growth of the
city, sprouts & off 'natural' until
collapse, where we

organs hollow left
heat w/out clambering
ingredients f' each hour had

built 2008 2001 1993

1986 1973 1929 1907

1901 1896-73 1866

1847 1837 1825 1819

1796 1772 1720 ⁱⁱ ventriloquist towns
of our births, of death finance personified
, extract suffer

/ance & life support / premium
foodbanks & detentions, border strictures &
hang of "the law private &

up close / I
wanted to [...] be a joke", ⁱⁱⁱ cracked
fetish : canary wharf

ⁱⁱ Marx (1991: 536).

ⁱⁱⁱ Verity Spott (2014: np).

priderant in five parts

i.

the relativity of pleasures || social's contemporary sculpted
/ barred as enclosures
private „, scarcer
gaming the pound / speculative;;

shattering the self[-]capital mutating sexual dissidence
subsumed ~~//~~ transformed : breeding dead
life through the identical ~~\~~sweatboxed
in alcohols drenched homing / returns on ploughed decades
singing of yur boyfriend's pop-visage, your
desire : an established market mass
product / value fluctuating that
yur beautiful survives only w/its circulations
limits of liberal thought.

11.

activity multiple of selves / the nation boundary
 defence/ contain/surveillance that
 / the waking for the wage each AM
 to produce our equivalence & homes
 shirts of diversity for assimilation through work
 anti-discrimination ordinances state just / protector
 worldmaking, the gay contemporary
 franchise of muscle & belonging identical//
 stratified bank of 'not
 enough recession jobloss' england / beset
 anxiety constellating week
 enfolding job centre plus
 [»] queer love in the lyric surround /
 sound systems parade of flesh abstract
 & financial industry
 / between tesco & bp trying
 to stake radical our /::
 'if you're queer & you're poor / if
 you're queer & you're poor / then
 you're fucked', resistance negated,
 compartmental / continuing autonomously to be
 & to fuck as the
 parade & the protest march correlate
 only in their loss of efficacy.

V.

penetration wrapped in union
jack dancefloor / sweating

beautify abstract pulse coin pulse model pulse
body flows frame advert distributions human capital /
brands personified—*wages or your life*—extraction

fossilised refinery to white liberal

◀boss as spare lover unclothed▶ 52%

more inclined to buy from gay friendly

ethics at the canapés popular

ambassador white

cis male dominant imaginary private

jouissance site oil

tax ejaculate dancefloor breath barclays employerhaven

bullington men's room swallow boris thrill

married into force tory state & assets thrilled

with corp back & major white

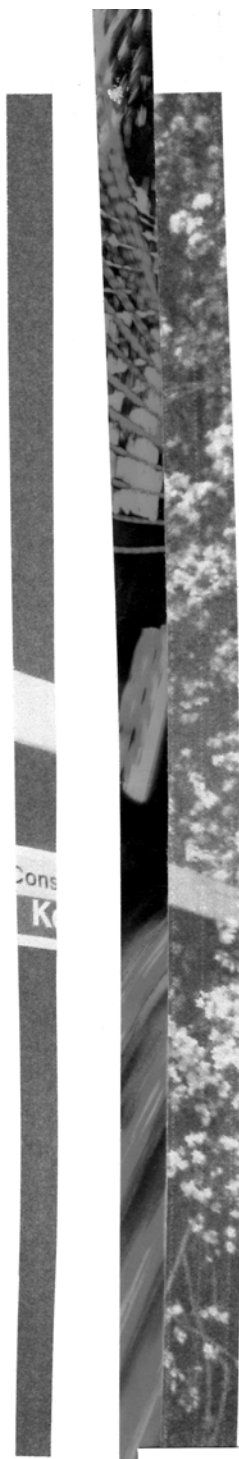
flesh erect come on board ~~##~~ freedom to

(when we're working while we're asleep)

curves us from
 the day's intern
 \ positioned , close drawn
 , heat
 wrap shift
 affections 'cross
 surfaces
 our,
 cheek &
 hairstroke comfort in
 the
 historicity of rest space ::
 keeps minds near [Δ
 & felines in start: winter
 , radiates through privacy housed, exchanged,
 captures each action for
 & emits social myth [§ & that
 if restless
 we will
 struggle at the premise capacity for the day due
 / as the blind pulls itself
 to gloam
 electric the police stationed/ fortifies
 neighbourhood ~~///~~
 of arms tending , clutch
 despite the nerves inactive , ache
 limbs to agony / drained from the type,
 inhabits exiting to a.m., alarmist // held
 together queer women
 anterior to labour dates /
 subsist even as muscles &
 /or thought stall
 :: without of the workplace forms
 as it shores subjection / cultivates , gains our
 remaking out of sight // that
 the fictitious private, hewn their
 reified work of romance

the relations where our genders fall
as the simplest of words, we
lust for the rest / hands
freest from repetitions of the wage

, they: pathology weaponised
struggle to thief health / to grasp the poem
& nuzzle you as capital kisses it night



our dreaming // monopoly
 corners of the city profit
 subsidy
 legal labour 'strait
 to death & sings
 sings the violent sector, overseers
 of the poor & sings
 the negative consciousness : question
 of the capital fetish i was posing
][its digital
 faces / live money growing by money / canary
 wharf emanate \ flow fire
 [] its none answer
 derelict language way of/& things
 & strain
 graze blood [] rationale that all must be held
 & made & sold
 & made & sold & again & keep the
 money breeding
 poverty breeds
 territory breeding dead viral in our arms
 & guts & accounts the brightest
 glass & veins reflex its
 possessive relentless
 & apparition the rebirth of its cosmos /;;
 // they claim to the law that such
 secure \ asphyxia & stress to
 investment
 forcebrand omissive their
 utterances hold from
 slaughter judge expend
 every minority imagined in the corp-mind exit
 duty as flight dead hammerwhite
 -property
 [x] chorus hysterical & building
 ,, our hysterical
 pleasure collapse of values,, roads
 ancient to the sense gathering
 condensed images digital
 currency shut down wretch
 vacancies in the praxis of the city / trade
 rein stricture :: we sung the
 violence of their laws & slaughters in
 mourning all organs we occupied ::
 abolition of our fears
 & its injection into shares of the ftse 100

after rituals :
 yur assertions of good living
 over sim
 -plicity atomic of
 a name / unknown.
 that we might approach the dead
 to know,
 this
 week Leslie Feinberg, much of our
 deaths & of comrades
 needed 'gainst greying / culture
 casual, drawn structured to suffer
 slight & exacerbate
 from health, pharmaceuticals, textbooks &
 limit narration break
 temporary, frayed clothes to
 ward possible
 song,
 the plural sic 'tween awards
 &
 crowdsourced rent as vitality
 severs w/ governance
 of friends of the dead
 turning existence to art, projections
 from which to speak, from the
 piercing freeze
 of safety, from
 patrols folding us out
 the trust of whiteness socio-material, executes of sisters of colour /
 / Papi Edwards / Lamia Beard / Ty Underwood / Yazmin Vash Payne / Taja Gabrielle DeJesus &
 yur response of raceless reform//
 from the violence & threat institutional held against us in youth,
 from the labour that keeps circulating pathological,
 from the epistemic violence of identity based history
 [november '14]

(light poem)

de/light/lete

/ful phenomena

rays chrome a

ravine

incident ray

[ineligible] in
, forces

[no lives

if defined

:: delight chrime

scape to civil

I, scatter investive

I₀, of the incident

COMPARATIVE
PHOTOGRAPH
sents the

α , polarisability

relative to the claimed

familiar / exemplary / aggregate [del]

partial [specks in the beam

raw history of vanish. / stoppage
hold the surplus / you wearin
logo, brace / replace / vivid
process grunwic 1976, shirt
feminised / flesh origin--
collective seize culture & still.

basic virals of the year will claim
fleck skin us from time free to

hack lungs, contaminant blisters for lips &
all our ownspace [□] so by the second
~~week~~ we wretch harder sad «

« pleas

/ur

the replace

chemical soak &&&

harsh rest skin

continues to tear hands at: ^{these are the}

healths if designated, buffer

era's rationality

sick/est as the

doctor acts is to outcome on demand



rest designation on divergent
physicality

/ you

keep us in close arms

the work through which our wrists
& genders put to concrete
/ homogeneity coarse

vibrations shot systemic, nerves



// beau green you
& morning catch joy
// the day, & the failures
of separatists & social democrats
» will extract margin
char anger on our cognitives /
scene zero point

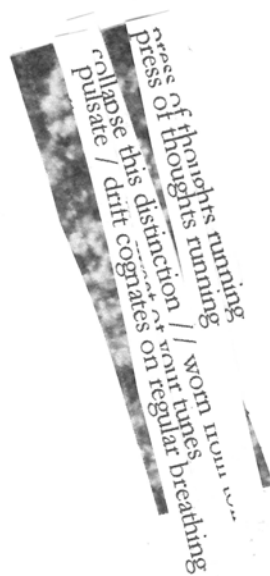
“ “ focus cross sun cheek slight

“ in eye momentary to detail skin
& follicle / endorphin'd

road-led excavate 'flect jacket hues
switched bright / the daily private
winding cloth down would be
out in your favourite attire / for a
warmer public , to laugh &
lax the anxious

you, bringing knowledge socially just
for sisters & I
of futures possible
in the vacancy: contemporary queer
lyric origin the difficult mechanics of bodies

flame sirens hoarded, evergreen //
will wake in the want to shatter price tags
on the culture we articulate, immanent





ep out
function site
speech to a
via the re
profit #freedomto relax
identical in the cult
station to tax to belonging to good
good professor good institution good
hegemonic in

make capital gains

material fenced for futures lux
homes / ideal sourced on
precarity of present the

day / wage authorised
sleepthought glut'd
returns & our sale

CORONET

the siren of body broadcast contented loud
from fulltime its norm dogmatic
we emits its private sphere
claimed space
in
firmen
on articula
crowd evening
nt relation str
ive selfhood assured
universal
citizen

designations:
disinvest feeding &
house public / benefit
cap / curving back to the landlord
architect bliss social particular
sinkhole & cash credit
rubblesect amersham & ache pave
meant order of sewage

in the survival of winter
approach choke new cross road diagnostic
[151.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ PM10 filth hack occupational
assess &

redund &
repetitive self-brand / three
sirens old kent unmarked

9.39 / 0.6%
growth in the
spring, who is

objects & subjects of recovery
historical lies the

city of westminster
kernel of dispossession

step circ-

dictation of the working day kept / split on &

shoot extensors

– separation of rational spec-

ulate or / yur life / keeps the riot

vans trafficking new cross road 9.25am concreton

/ lots greater waiting for

crane than

proximal to us current the

being-price systemic our complaint

sound homes broke / we meet here remains

the same except in inflictions

securitised && trampled in

from the

view

shard \neq strategy ::

of the act & banner

&

keeping the cop pay

social

de

teriorate /

/

executes *in situ*

design address \neq skulks

\neq *by the baton &*

§35 cranes / impositions,, \neq *in*

wisdom disperse &

blood turns to thamescolony

precipice liveable

\neq trust tells

\neq *in his wisdom*

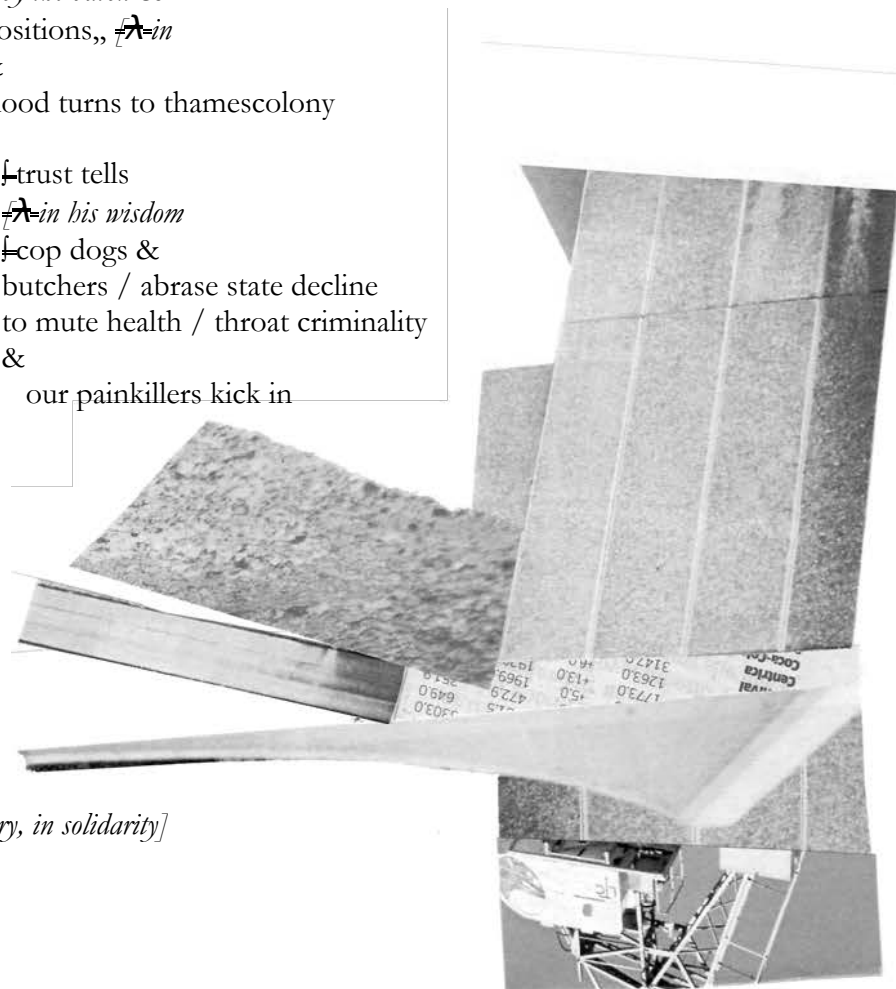
\neq cop dogs &

butchers / abrase state decline

to mute health / throat criminality

&

our painkillers kick in



[19th february 2015, nr. the aylesbury, in solidarity]

(society will execute itself)

we have already lost the 2015 general
 vows austere realpolitik blessed
 & kneeling before the ECB ~~ff~~ immune / flamed
 police car / productivity gap
 the grasp
 becoming ownership
 elect
 -/action boundary orbit
 directives constrained
 , that they write us off from the inch of deviation
 bodies as conflict to orthodox economics ~~the~~ *the*
division of migrant labour inside the houses of parliament
 administered / negative reality drops
A & its experiments severing
 owed ground, breath.
 knowledge redact to
 transaction ~~se~~
 // if our
 frustration livid in the riot form / state
 of being as response :: what
 of the need to break thru /
 hierarchy, sensuous archives
 the violence lived to each
 of us,
 particular, constellating,
 in scale & critique new to exist us
traumas of hunger & the formations of life we have been inventing since every decade
& work shackled us closer--
& hetcultures fissions source value
bleaching the minds ~~#~~ over which we feed against the
our history denial of health/ nutrients
felt / merest percentile being as
reversed destruction of the earth
 circulates
 , impends, all fault sourced lapse
 asocial
 lines abstraction to the £ contracts
 & spews
 narrative / recovery
 plane carved
 from possible living
 extricated from the future of
 us / closer daily
 logging in hope
 of addition / cost effect,
 « our possible beyond
 « value's conceptions & births

that fear bred by law &
 capital newsprint
 frays nerve only
 in our cellular ~~/*~~
 taken daily to pave / ages
 downward
 spectral
 to the bullet for any black person :
 state sanctioned & de
 -livered as just /
 sphere of such notions dispossessing
 ;; rational w/ the cuff-threat to our friends =

of officer cognitions :: that this death
 does not exist in *our* borders /,, elevations
 of possible violence
 w/in the solidarity & not
 baton & cell,, that the mass
 arrest here is not for profiles
 racialised w/ white cop
 minority against
 brown & black youth our breav
 inflect resounds fierce, feminine /
 that the guilty particular remains determinate
 negation of cognitive ~~is~~ blood of the british state since 2001
 , 1981, 1757, 1562 tends our separations by culture, by the
 knife at skin

// what momentary we crashed
 still regent & oxford sts brooklyn
 bridge FDR drive route 580 the
 flaming economy of ferguson ;; as our 'don't
 shoot' & bodies
 break the / whitehall fear charge of riot vans

[december 2014]

morton ball dungavel colnbrook dover harmondsworth the verne
yarls wood tinsley house

negative constellations of
 the home

office ~~≠~~ collateral to terror abuse

& refuse

& profit

&

captures of freedom by the non-designation

bodies blacknd as

/ imminent critique of the colonies

the 2015 General Resignation / grey

breaking grey our reckoning old

kent frozen spring budget day with

-drawal of qualitative life means &

syllables sung economic optimism / growth

of violence / fortifications of discourse &

right & the false universal ~~≠~~ pits

the

bureaucratic

kingdom & its armours detonation east /

remnants unified

~~≠~~ constricts & detains

~~≠~~ have been refusing food

demonstrates movement / from

will to necessity //

police ode contain

expend / govern subject

/ negative cells for extinction by origin or psychosis

stop & search standardised street order

kept / deserving

nation / public

deaths slow as the sector contracts w/ the profit rate

barricade antifund wash smog westmoreland

↳ fortress campsfield, yarls

wood, harmondsworth/ the

total institution / ten o'clock

newscontent

fear & circulations tend to

plunder & syria / fasttrack & paracetamol, nail

your hunger to the gut of theresa may//

ashes of our work onto parliament square, which you can
 holiday w/ police throwing knives charge
 / odeful hallway snailing city
 hall glass, your murder of
 frequencies & hours
 barb the workday
 & A&E warped into yur lux home to filth
 to gull & garbage struck still & labourless
 & ancient foul of thameswash

[14.10.14]



£/€xtinctions

"the fucked up globe / desegregation" ~ Fred Moten ^{iv}

"Mankind has obviously reached the end of something. The crisis is absolute." ~ C.L.R. James ^v

^{iv} Fred Moten, 'fishbone/joseph jarman', *B Jenkins*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010, 10.

^v C.L.R. James, 'Dialectical Materialism and the Fate of Humanity', *The C.L.R. James Reader*. Edited by Anna Grimshaw. Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1992, 153-181, 153.

escalate ~~the~~ fibres shook toned in
 -auguration of decimate

future nightmares for the poor
 : of the form blasted / fracture
 physicality fishhooked work/
 day & its
 opposite, grip muscular / teeth
 tearing into heads, bleach

our governing suitors
 executions & their savaging commonplace \neq
 sick in the daily dreamt &
 organised deletion

in swing / thought infect &
 rose each image child
 general purged ~~the~~ consciousness,,
 all rhetoric / outrage will be eclipsed
 by the immediacy of five years sociomaterial violence

$\frac{1}{2}$ react acid of black blood
 & bones private diets

taxcuff \neq securitised bedrooms
 / percentile market \neq untapped

all future chasms &
 scripture \neq the
 tower of london / archaic
 corpse automation / office sense
 re-enactments for the present
 \neq of our extrication, street & future fetters
 / alchemic bliss out futures trade
 based for skin sung as liberal no
 life or starve opt

// our idea of possibility negative until
 its encounter & latency extended to
 every hour housed slumish
 in the gut
 of hunger & desperation ,,

throatfumes advocate
 of the epoch
 warfare &
 street cleansing

// set our rentscares
 & every figuration of barricades \

frackture debt claim the
 setting of clocks naming
 each day & night
 aspects ~~\\~~ BX14 LDN screaming

6.31pm craned babylon glistening
 corpse & working week glassed
~~=====life chute~~

dreaming us deadwork or flayed

, disinvested what they
 repeat commissions &
 circuits, newsprint, executioners, riot vans
 , absolute heist

[may 2015]

«# pronouncements

, brief cases, blue rigour in savage &
scorched rhymes

budget / cull pleasure
, the owners of the city

london as medusa, london as
malnourished & the foodbank norm

≠ classifications of our angers
& sufferance, entrepreneurial

& the history of layoffs erased at the door of every job centre,
living cut loose / economic life

«# pronouncements of similitude, british & capital values, the
voice of margaret thatcher on the bbc, the violence
of margaret thatcher in the throat of your

essential

father,, the violence of margaret thatcher in the pronouncement of your futures,

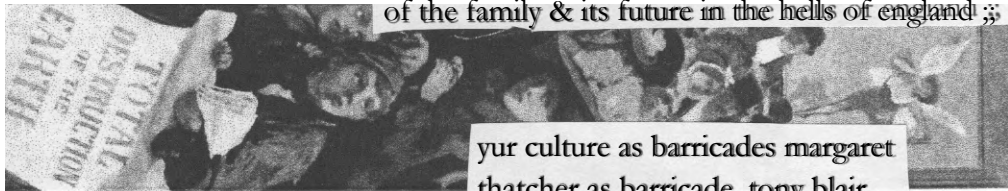
the violence of maggie thatcher lipping brown & bourgeois

‘community’, the fascists of the neighbourhood, the

racists of seaside towns, police

actions, private values, the beliefs

of the family & its future in the hells of england ;;



yur culture as barricades margaret
thatcher as barricade, tony blair

as barricade, the colonisation of spirit as difference

we were not to exist // the land is

for purpose stripped

of fleshs

// asphyxiate deviance

sense of us collapsed

as we broke

constraint: politics

** in dead time / “dust

*the exposed layer and reveal the
unfathomable”,*

into those on the day & the

care we could deliver in it. raged

enthralled

lips sketch across our disintegration ☹☹

dredge

reasons, numerous why we
still try to love the city, our move
-ments collapse

desiring /, sideways

☹ that we used to write in
joy &
emergence ,, millimeters on
our bodies, that the atoms

assembling our conception of world
fundamentally altered
to fight for /
each's survival /

in deletions official
of culture
glimpse coordinates of greyscraping,,
drip-city foul, guards
slow famine ∖ coffers & august death

*checkmate played, eco-
systemic may*

shutter out humming our
former bedrooms, of steps
of sway diverge melodies

/ some-age buzzing pores & hers
& stomachs

THE CARE GROUND

the
concept-life health as moral proclamation, resource
according to gain, funds according deterrence, service
conditional /

valuations of labouring bodies,

migrants dream over
The **VIOLENT** economy

as the weekday now weighs out fluidity of
spirits / held line / as the border force
/ knowable devils,

the British national psyche -

ABSOLUTE

social division
conservatism.

creativity and corporate finance, more

Class war:

WITH FINE GOLD.

for your protection

nationally secure actions
& poetics

left to dream / by company of friends had, dictate
the / myriad slow stepping

in constelling articulates, held ourselves

through parties, fictional
punk bands, fictional talk.

clock weighs all implements for writing

. you give a provision for lines: "lets
home &

owing furore over
credit

for the provision of health" the
thread against & on visible skins.



low paid. There were riots in
separations in the name

felt violence.

between sides of earth, all

of bridges
horizontally and
lands. Bridges

recovered Scotland.

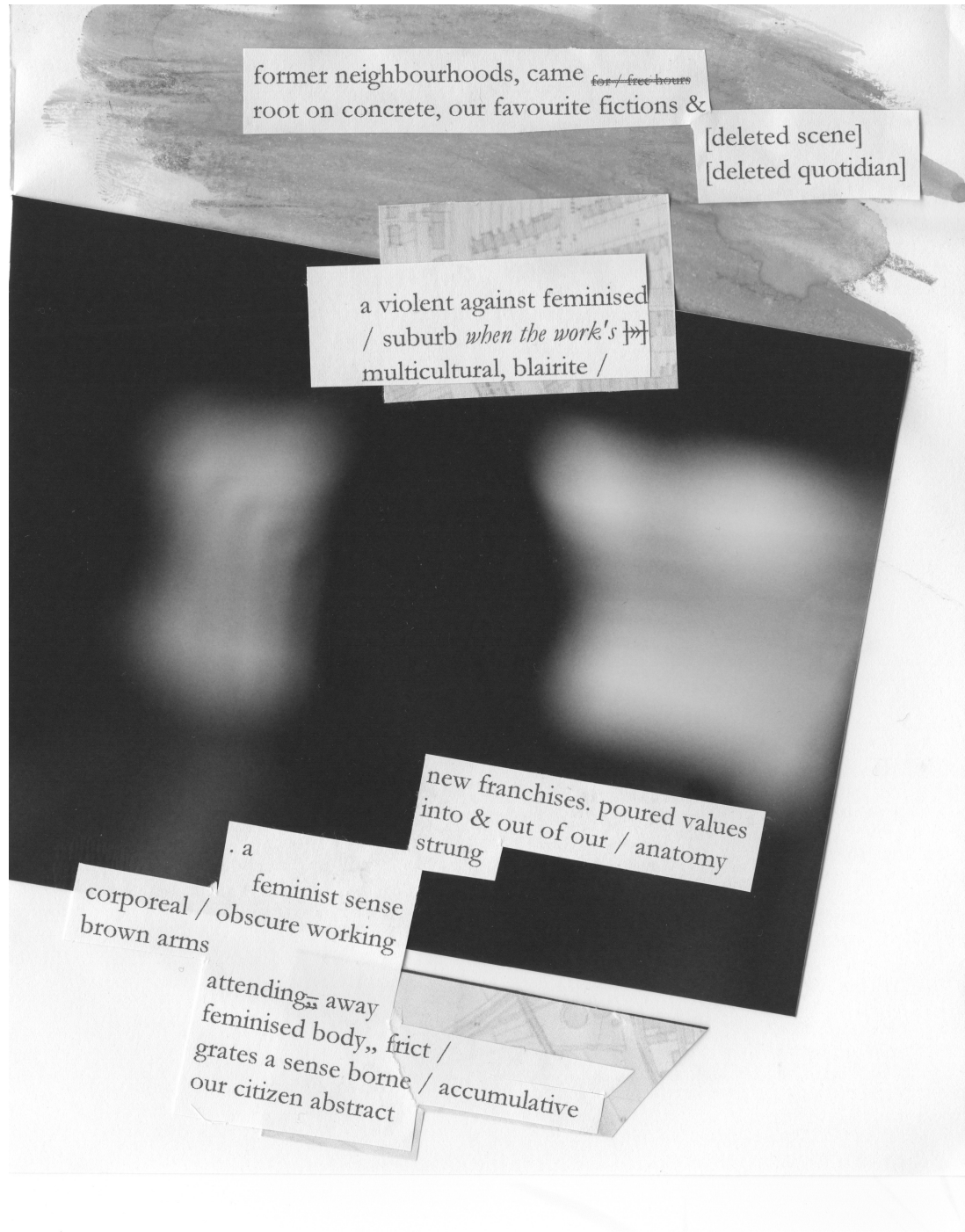
is nowhere
hands can

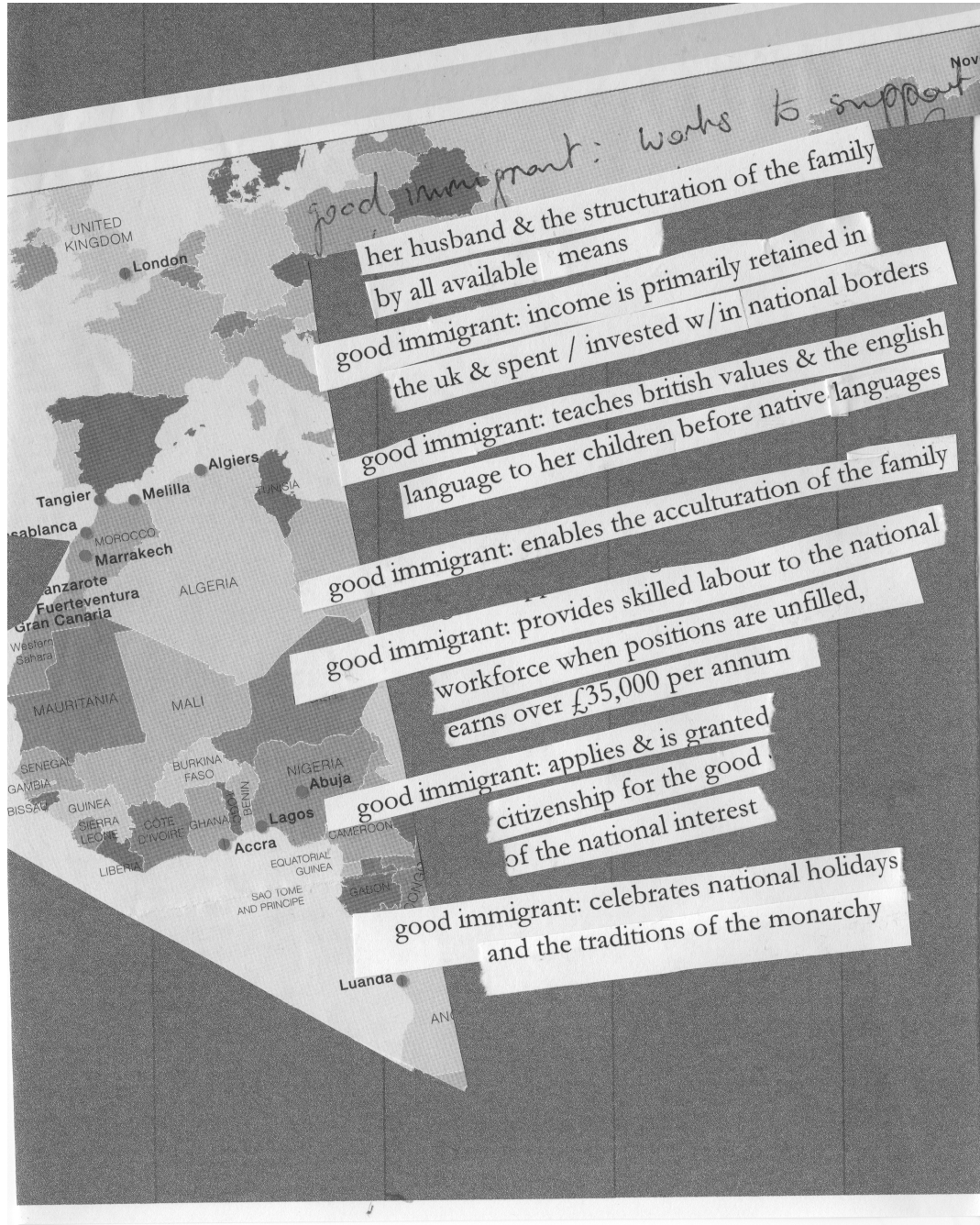
, in fall's thought through to

dailiness, where we
feed our lovers & wages

out of all lines we / ripped
 teenages , necessary ~~==~~ reactive decades
 , clarity in diversion / ors
 obedient to choke, scars embedded
 / worn,
 adjunct to the ease of straight
 world divisions, circulate
 arms loving keep
 hands attached & gathered
 keeping erasure & the loss of lovers suffix ::
 tipping points & present allies
 in airports, scanned outlines of physical flesh

 we disidentify with youth's assimilation,/familiar





*“now: if human / enough, directed through
 museums of humanity, / human to you,
 your soft plinth”*


~ Vahni Capildeo (2015: 17)

metropol office
 rot / solstice bare antidotes on our
 vacant, caught hours &
 imaginaries,, the

literatures of our desolution & movement, break

$\frac{7}{x}$ suspend victoriana, its streets & casual

/ police van becket st. 10.09am

plurality of our blood /  the
 decolonial poetics
 sent nature to shatter linkage
 & destinations of the national interest

, continental sails drifts
claimed soils & bodies. here

in fever dream / landscaped conceptual

beauty of the gentry, visions
city light skyscraping flesh we
inhabited in former decades

in the present, /
hydration cedes flesh
electric

the passage of

FUTURE

OR CUT OUT THE STARS, muscles wire
horizontal emit
vague dull & desolation
the basis of utterance // while the
muscle / tissue diverges

alluded circulations, asyncopated

as the mouth holds breath

, queer

of embodiment & the demands of the day, throat
clips & glitches | centigrade

autumnal sun „ would we close hands for

meadow humming with drones /
/ defensive nature

Ellis said the gulls are pursuing the city

deptford: the rain against

the finance industry, its fictions of ownership,
spored into our (lung

felt like a spell

walls we leased against the w // age(s)

the winter as thawed arctic, the hardest
cells), through
national freeze

has no

redemptions

to be dismantled from its knitting hands

decades reassured w/ yur
utterance; way of/& thought ¶

we were negations „
identity extended by you
easy bourgeois speech

shove us until we
deemed fertile / striped it out of
us for
recognition & cheques

our target to feel here
being as breaking to

interrupts on telecom buzz

/application procedure //

weigh fabric of cognitives & kohl & micro-
political apologies &

readings of your voxtone
, & that tomorrow will
be defunct for brainwork
our divergent bodies exertion
fatigue in saturate , sky

our / intensive support _*

to be open towards / for
healing , tinged negative

cacophony
salutations rub / skid / through
breaking , that we could be
this warmed

our intensive valuations &
graze / manifest, slips
out of narrations & herstory , tense
rips the nuance from our throats
close to cognitives //
converse song of possible
shifting of possible arms &
syntax , *arms of miraculous refusal*
bare corporeal

how we feel through the particu-
larities of our brokenness / its
worth possibly together

gripping psychic bliss /
momentary , amid
its most reflective
dailiness

sweet cut lines of our shirts &
intonations

autocorrections of desire to bills

state of y/our bodies
interrupts & the
hour for sustenance
& feed the break of the working
for a different
form , the herstory
of all dinnertimes , eyes
digest eager of the product
eyes digest , of gendering active
life of from

here in the diaspora, un-
learning faux cultures
, their
investments in our arms & genders

/ our solidarities
vicious, damaged,

heinous / educators & the registration of citizens ,
 directs the promise / possible
~~7~~refuse to answer
 a poetics of violent
 & good nationhood ~~7~~

frustrations & sourced / we
overwhelmed w/ healing
& waged work
plotted a sequence of perverse beauties, our commoning :
a conception of need they could not
grasp.

of our bruises
& collective selves ;; fabrications
of / consciousness
the care that grows
us together, yet the
glamour & fracture of such love
scarce / down the

of future's england / its stratifications
 & the economic,
 of the economic &
 Sarah Reed
 , of sanctioned benefits & health blackouts
 & the economic,
 of sectioned nerves & muscles & the mental health act 2007
 & the economic, of the economic / remedial productivity
 & demands on all bodies &
 psychologically sanctioned work, of
 sectors glowing eviscerate working &
 the economic,
 of terror's industry & the safety
 of europe from itself
 , of the economic & pipelines &
 future criminalities, of the trans woman of colour
 in greenwich prison (we do not yet tell her name)
 & legal aides ≠ regressive justice
 & all detained futures
 & the economic
 , of serco
 & geo
 & g4s ~~ff~~ at doorbell & the economic, of the economic
 & super-prisons
 && lend lease borough of southwark,
 of our isolations
 & the economic
 & our commons
 & brownness / articulate & mobile &
 , of the economic & our neighbourhoods
 anxious estates / storage
 containers
 & inaccessible homes,,
 of downturns & cop shops & Mark Duggan & the economic
 , of Cherry Groce & english surveillance & the economic, of

transmissions daily, microwaves, radio, liquid crystal,
videoboards/ scrolls & mass oracles :-:

that scapegoats of discontent, violent dailies, the cellular
saturation of fresh glass & lesions, capital drains on
health, the global movement of bodies for the bread, our
chronic underemployment.

the name of a fascist as individual, mad (sic) / free britain
as false absolute; an island irrevocably international in its
hatred & bloodshed. free britain as impossible, already
extinct.

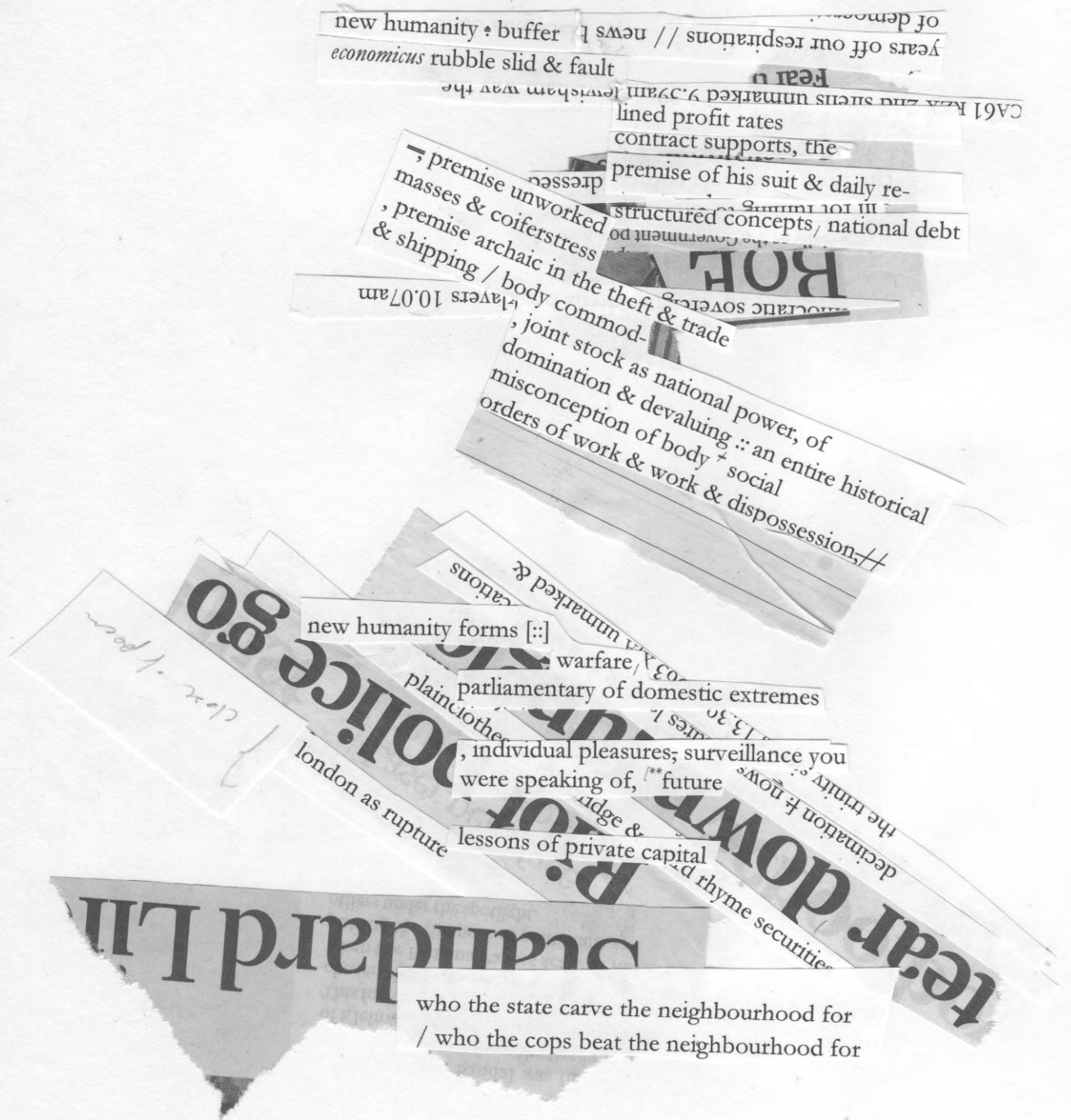
- ☐ isolate horror
- ☐ nightmares redoubled

the corpse spills an imaginary to keep its violence
quotidian, its institutions, untenable morality, creating
y/our indebtedness, stripping vitals from all hours,
bodies, churns secure capital deportations.

you love rhetoric. you love debate. complacency
extinguishes instinct, replaced w/ neolib sense. in love
with the thrill of appeasement. turns over in the dream of
fascist england, totalitarian england, ballot options &
continuums, the border is securitised / the border never
holds.

all of the above a redbloodied cakehole.

all revolt against ideals.



our presence in the city / historical
 odds / the most racist electric
 . perimeters of work & re-
 strictures education. *la frontière*
quotidienne. distant futures or \pm
 extractions. rent day &
 terror / externalised english fear /
 just#

's aura deptford high street 10.
 22am multiagency / unmarked
 galaxy SE59 XER flanked by

3 officers left onto new cross
 road ;; returns in the opposite / turns
 left onto florence rd the
 material & immaterial border,,
 gentry's border //

anxieties our / keep us
[‡] sun deficient / marking on healths
 fabrics sweetness / break

tense into knowing / out of the wear
 , underschooling nights collapse
 anxiety into active
 form / hunger into improv.

honed tongues, vectors of broke / parliamentary, represent~~/e~~
 universal britain, its sanctioned divisions & checkpoints
 national interests & fabrications
 , narrates a glorious / fallen
 , holidays & morals, prowess of
 war & production; cor

-rupt history & stand-
 point, failed
 singular nation, no
 throughway / hyde
~~#~~curing, we
 talked until our
 seared retinas, ~~#~~rule

britannia certified [N]
 illusion of the working classes taking
 control, the deluded reproduction
 of white britain historically, the
 nationstate / attempt to assert

the capital controls on all † its century of decline
 political statements, action
 in the image of dead
 summers,, dead oceans,
 debt corpse,
 tenuous unity, our //
 actions a local cluster
 in which we could / “*the*
deepening of all particulars”^{vi}
 /~~#~~ regicide

class war machinations
 :: leverage our quantified
 status & nationhoods, stats deserving
 & productivity,, our very fabric of means /
 vital sustenance / processed healths & abilities
 , wavebreaks through caring, governance
 anxiously lived, privatised, the
 site of all character assassinations & appeals
 , our bureaucratic worth;;

reacts spirit tends injection drill
 flesh pierce to cuff / removal
 , violations procedural revenues
 , captures airborne / meteorological [%] an
 election to be waged on
 / centrifugal statistics,, geographies of removals &
 repossession orders,, human shreds & divisions
 , forecast [::] winters / contractions, decomposed wages,
 provincial england, forecast [\]
 theresa's bitterest hands

a global history of movements
 , growth lies, bitter
 invasive england, blood
 types & genomes,
 crashed electoral futures
 / insolvent cities & admini-
 strations, our possible urbanity
 ; against england :: centuries revolt
 common / deletions of wealth,
 airspace shutdowns &
 detentions,, a tendency towards
 the abolition of england
 its primal violent loves.

of possession of the earth
 , it's vital organics & loves, to
 have & to hold / of human aliquots, our
 arms, shades of flesh,
 possess cultures & hearts & principle &
 titles to brick & founded
 mortar, the fruits of all work

detonations of the tongue:
 financiers, landlords, judges &
 circling cop cars, fissions of legality
 , austere, regional decline✚
 that to love this english soil &
 all historic expropriations, a national image, customs & borders ,
 to look into the face of your love & bare the right to their flesh ::

on promise of the soil, elite
drivel, cathexis, bitter

 jammed \neq rotational spheres
 , false translations of geography
 decommissioned towns \neq de-
 commissioned wages, extraction
 , that capital does not give a fuck ;;

atomic vowels of the
ruling, leylines of colony & hadrian, seas
 between famines
 unreported, the struggle
of newsprint as enterprise
 , austere hungers, histories of wages,
the promise of the island imperial

 a national
 -ist / ex-
 plosive, here
 , asserts a violent sameness,
 reified flags & senses, unjust
 yet defends the 'democratic',
 strikethrough the multicultural
 , strikethrough labourforce, the
blesséd police / to be wedded
as theatre of national pride, a very
english maintenance

~~#~~ the vibrant domestics
 , streetsurge, print &
 militant fissures of fear, present
 & pasts of anti-racism

by the mesh of your inactive
 decades, ballots & workdays
 ruptured fauna / meteorology
 of the social
 translated out of fact / demo-
 lished july frozen skin, private
 security, new wealth & prime
 ministers

„ on the walls of all detention centres
 prophetic // historic rupture
 shatter legality bourgeois freedom
 „ on the walls of all detention centres
 deleted points of navigation
 delete shares & secure investments
 delete british futures of lockdown

morning / proselytise *tragedy*
 , *helicopters* & *border patrols* /

crumbling acres, enforcement
 newsbait & sympathy # tuning
 fork for national psyches, the arbiter
 of action is the violator
 // orchestrates criminal, good



barbed calais
 barbed marsham street

fiction future divisions of labour
 detention & the law, future war &
 stabilisations, future citizens abide

official divisions & affects, you
 powerless & democratic :: rings
 capital parliament to bae

to drones to lands unlike / white labour pyramid
 & their need for the movement of our migrated limbs

dominator's europe : centuries of gravity

vessels, chain navigation & credit

, moral capital subjugating

flesh ((multiple

keeps the law / class norm, breeds

futures & good liberals

short term delusional / cyclic

growth

* * all monarchs, all crosses, chemical

fortunes, by the land we struggle

till & trade skills, we were

/ emissions, future debt convulsed

radiations, shredded

canals & waterways

, shredding cultures & the fabric

of fleshs,

Now falt

gigacounters, failed flowers & crops

private defences, the context of all blood all vessels

grams, rain, famines under empire, financial phantasmagoria

escape us, hospitals escape us, demolished life

*intel/grates suprem fabriques
, scapegoats, official raists /*

euro excess :: its body fodder

expend / beyond investment, dioxides, differ water
prof

-iteering, de

valued spines & arms labouring, attendants &

legal negations, day limit free detentions / home

office eyes landlord

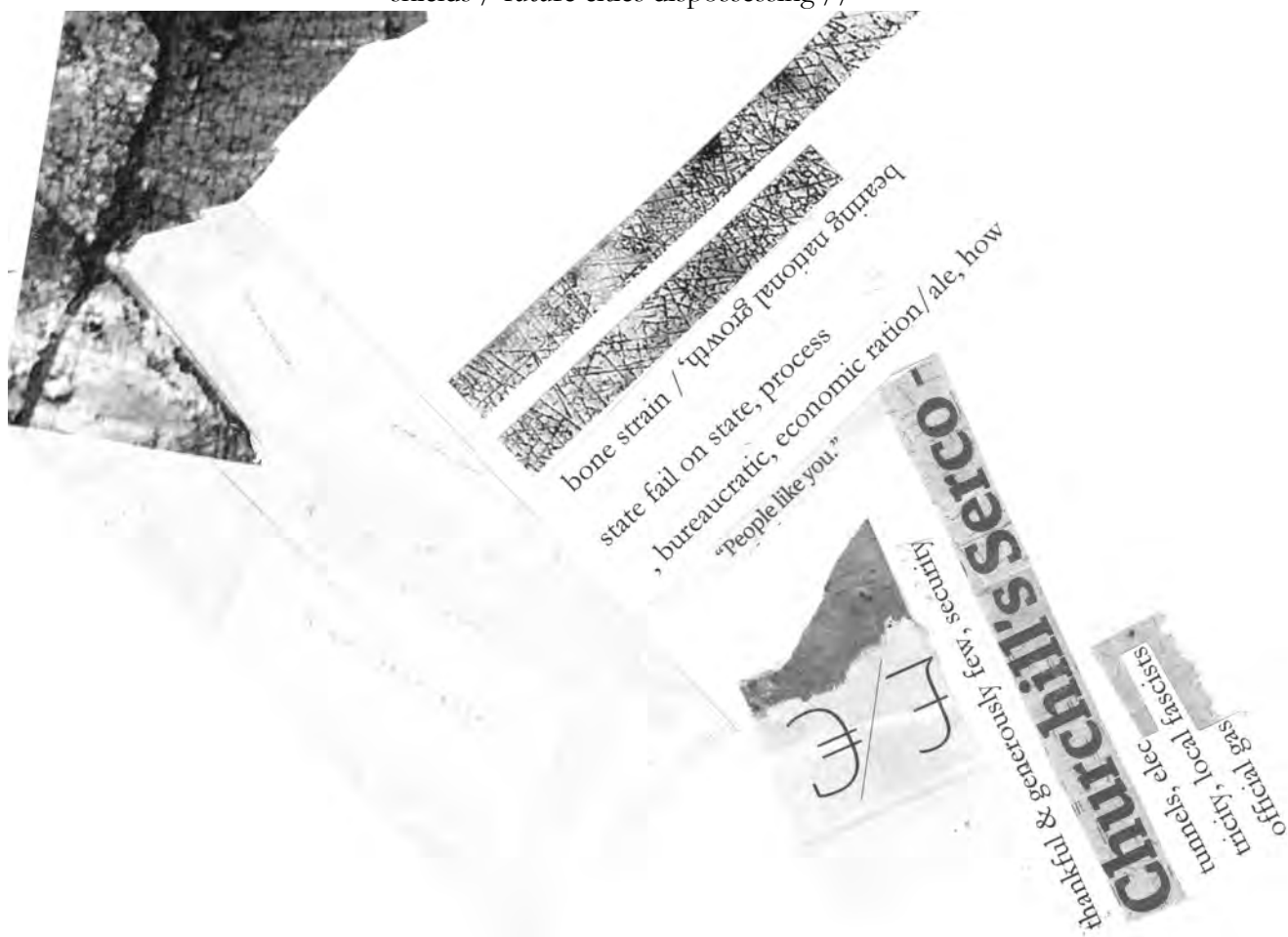
/ g4s as slum landlord, of the breathing

international bargain

ON THE WALL

between & camps / tear gas & riot

shields / future cities dispossessing //



the negation of england as island
 ; colonial geography in-itself #
 ocean as fiction, litter
 & rigs,
 fearstats, tear gas strung rail
 -lines, surround'd england,

theresa says: retaliate / attacks europe in her dreams & dailiness;;
 indigenous england;
 deport schengen & spouses. return in a safety we /
 already abolished safely

// threat level remains severe ÷ the ocean
 , the desert

 terrors: neo
 fract retaliate

 threading / episteme the
 fundamental unknowable, new

dronestrikes & oils ,

necrocommon & exports

militarised, breed'd

wealth & destruct^N \x keep the object-human
 fleeing out

of nations, hunger, repeat orders, strike
 derelict, extinctions built for this world

mourner's europe ~~fe~~

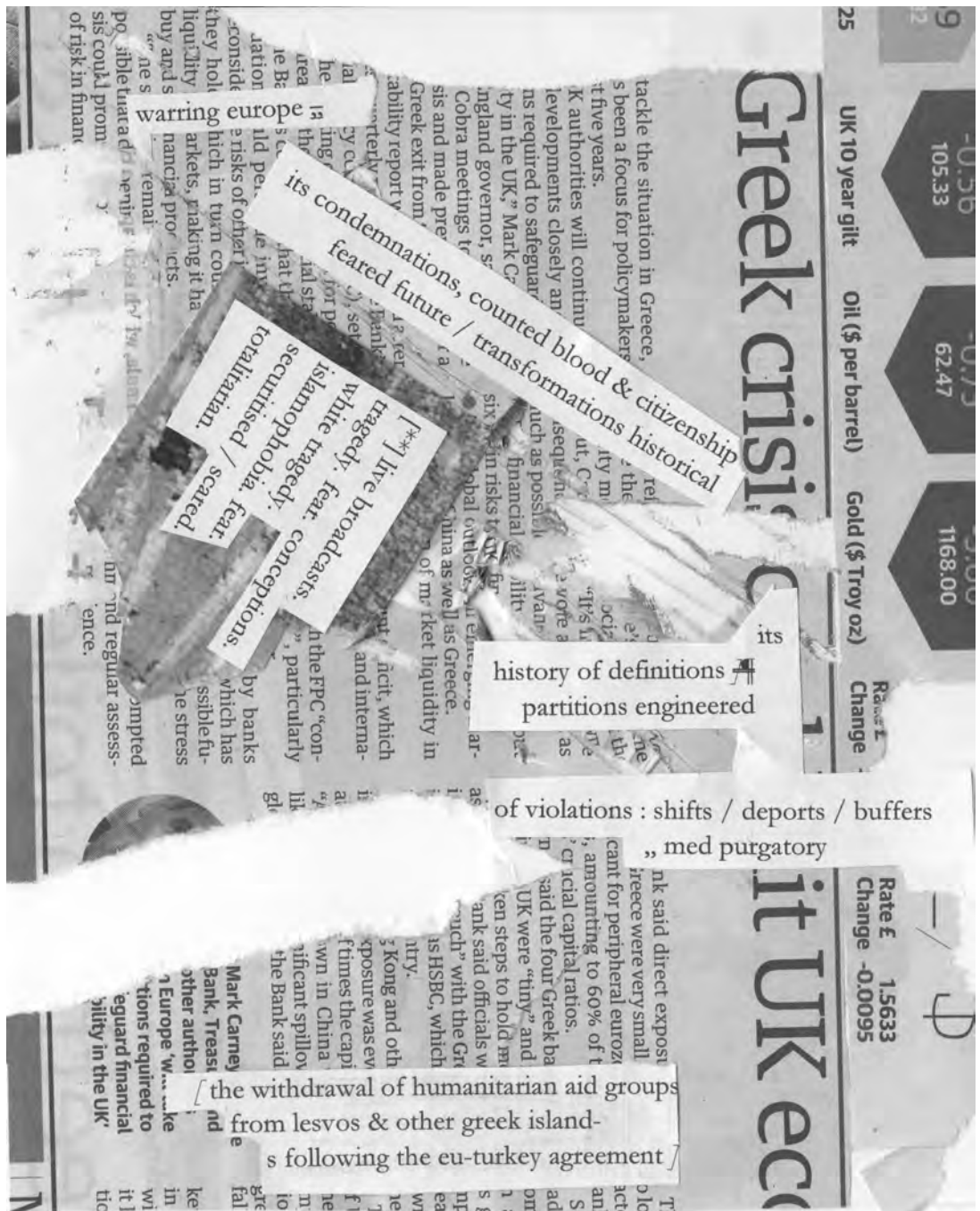
would flee its republics, totalities
 , police fixtures & armament norms
 & guards precarious;
 howls hours & raids,

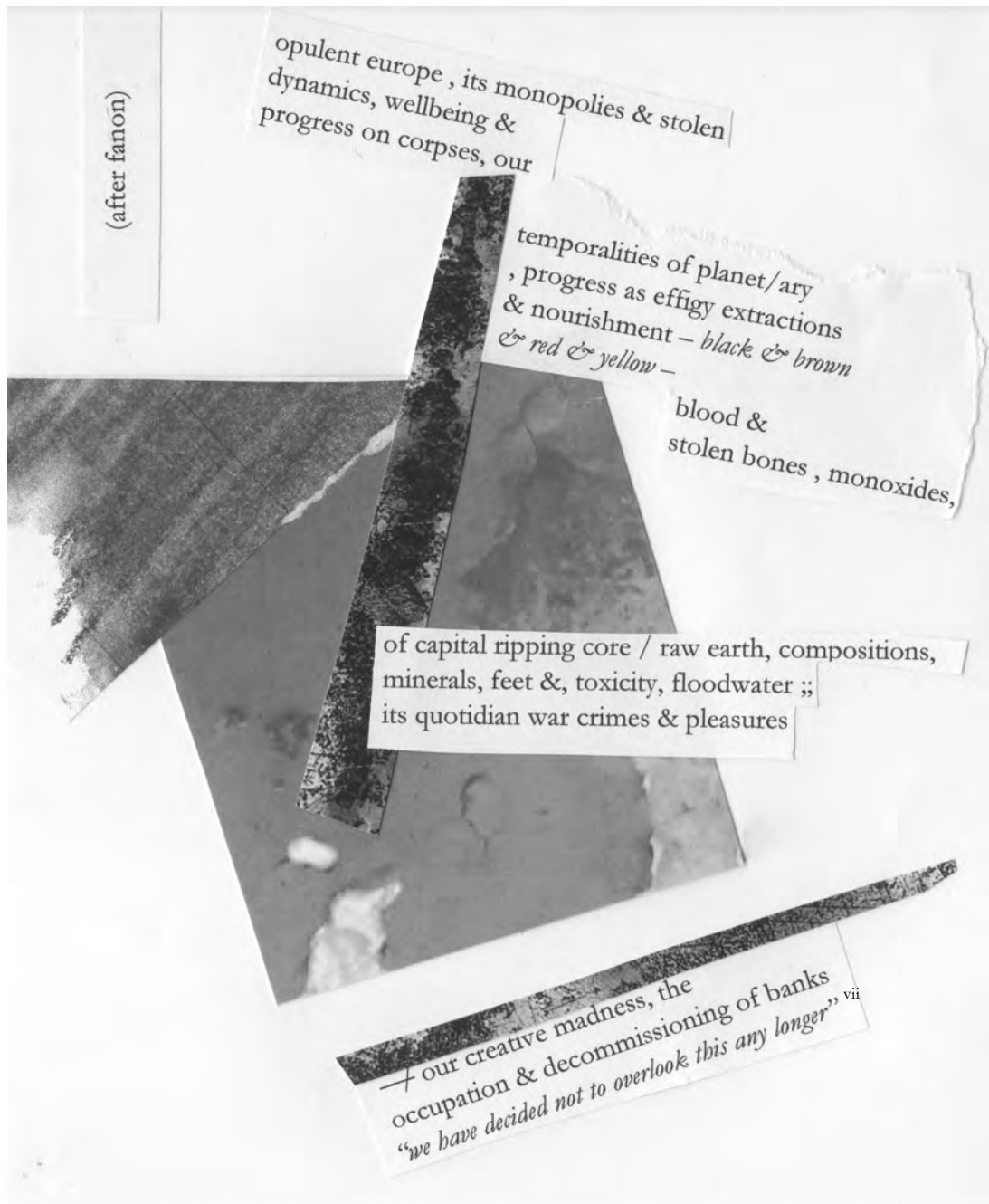
for your protection
 || cultural decades
 assimilar like Muslim like radcliffe lines / infrastru~~ct~~
 division mutually breeched,

~~se~~ *secures mythic free*
/ alertsong in
print / neofash europe

clearings /
 enlightened a
 subject in which we
 could not exist
 , bonds owed
 / alarmphones,, swallows med~~l~~

of future workforces
 future stoppage & revolt; the
 knowledge & memory of failures historical
 in the consciousness of seeking refuge





vii Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967, 67.

chills /« rivercurve

”

of the neighbourhood after
bred ships ~~¶~~ then lux
to finance

» mort wharf adjunct 'cross water

threaded glass by vine &
crash & decimate

*by the mud, green landroll [C our
suitcase held vivid;*

, the landgrass raising over dockyard & head,
where materiality failed

process rendered back into soil,

brief trees, carbons & nitrates, keep
the mist & the peace of it, the

sediment of all
hands & wood
& steel & the
girders history

's fabric in flesh

plunder & modern / atrocity / glass trash.

hygiene ecological. / thamesfog the city delete

⌘ paint stain / trace scissorcut
 black on fabric black fridays optical

walk w/ wirecutters
 for composition / survive
 read ∴ the sea as deletion
 of the fortress that it
 washes against, national
 fantasy border / force ⌘

~~temp news~~ gallery , prime
 drone kiss
 ≈ erode dover chalk

the erection of steel they
 believe can remain stable
 against the necessities of movement.

urban gulls, friends yur
 & scavengers
 / owners europe
 will miss us.

*feed your concept nation
 / shred office, r, as
 donations matched by corps*

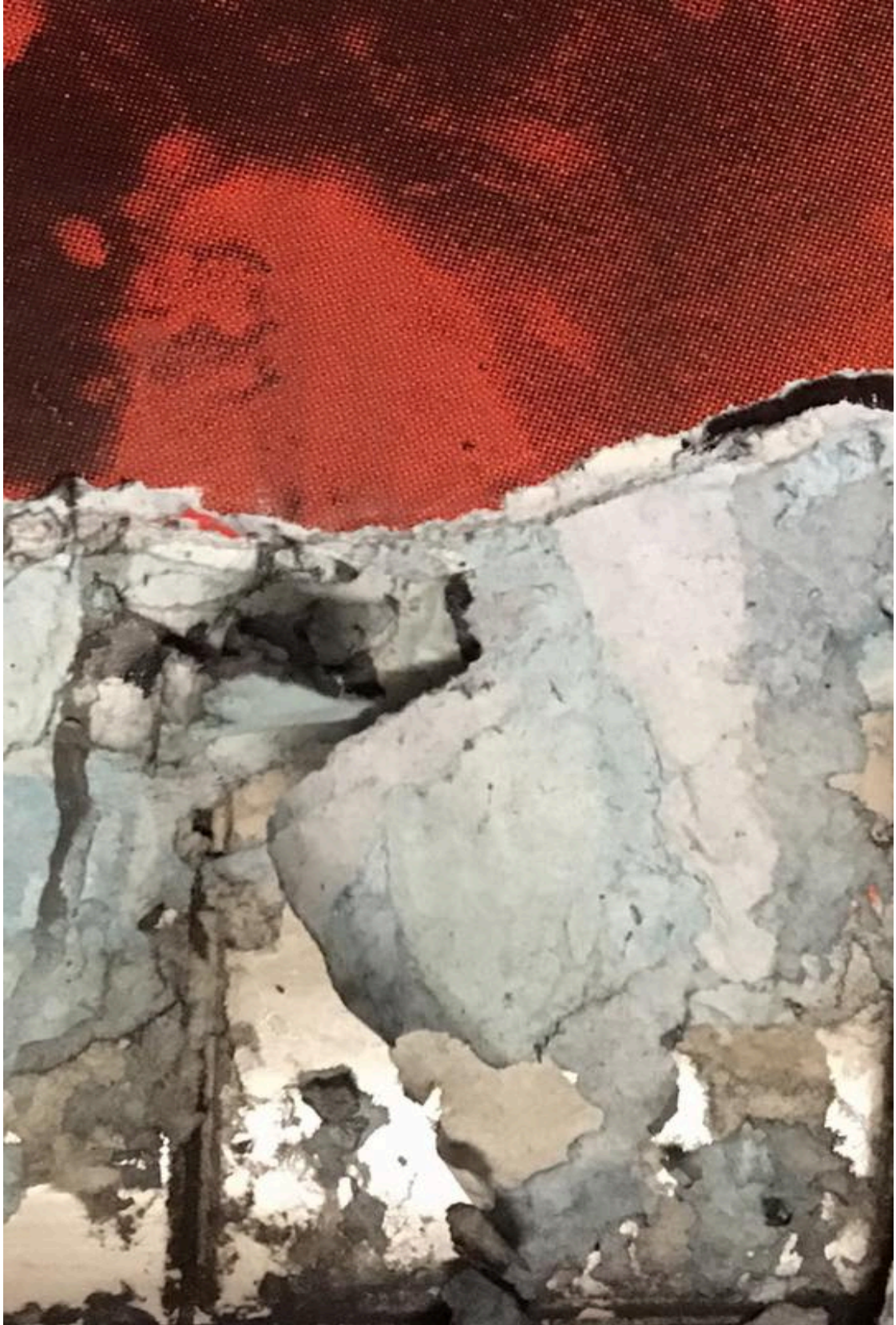
ƒ fleshmetal grip into ocean, transmutations we
had learned not to

gaze / searing skull
, how mechanics
fang for hydrocarbons,
oil-capital.

you
rig a
human body
& demand it street sweeps, pour,
metallic investment
emergent coral in the
sediment of classes today crude futures //

prehistoric extractions, horizon
as decimate horizon, the
last decline of barrels to the point of wastage
the middle carved &
exodus, between & the borderfort, deposits
carbon base :: upper classes anoxic / dead organics
crack / thermal, after centuries
extinct in europe

de/compositions



[stryd manig nines]
[revolutions on queen street]
for Mendoza

we're a
mess of eyeliner / chic dole lips
/ for real ~~we~~ spray paint
at seventeen:

adore. your. failure.

in our future bores sunshine, gonna
burn the claustro-
innocence
howls
you will hear

this is a message from occupied england
 , such deep & sucked corporate slums
 :: forecast / soothe, our
 derelict

strychnine flag scum barc
, poems on credit / injection –lays

heritage a corpse: drill lessons so/
beautiful in sani-
tised
 ``, condemned / masochist
 — with you i skin sinners

believe. // first world boredom, instantly
 drain coke/exxon[:] let the spill gorge
 -ous – donald's famine / more real in mc
 that will bring out freedom to life

, worms

convicted

. underneath skies dying
 beautiful europe / empty, blue:: is
 by our dreams baby,, pretty in eye-
 liner, broken in security,
 : fall to the floor / I no longer

in debris / live, we
 strung out sluts want our
 own //

every house in the quiet
 rot has a conscience , delicate pieces
 of scream

// write

this alone : every dayspit
 feels a corridor / fashion'd
 glitter in feeling well

repent . find refuge . grey
not neon, grey not real \neq
loose home, maggots scream/er
response / disappears
flesh—

mistook flowers for union jack &
spat,, trace creation. police vic-
tory is / bows down to surrogate
; now tell the difference/ before
lawyers :
starve like everybody else

loser . liar . comes to court
recreation for blank stars // too
much white in the stars & , *tie*
him naked & stern & merciless

#7 as weeds is
false oxford st. bull
-fight/ a week later no
one cares // your love
-ly effigy / tongue sold

everyone is guilty . pure
 or pendulum spec
 -tat/or fragments
 & bigots lovely —

democratic abyss / caress(es)
 moral odour fine colt equal
 ÷ dignified abuse// in come midges
 reagan, stalin, thatcher, napoleon,
 khrushchev, hitler, mussolini,
 churchill, chamberlain
 && designer coffee lears, I
 can't remember the first line

(after Vahni's reading)

shattered dynamics,

the

patterns on archaic & future hous

-ing , what we had been

tuned:: billboards, latinate, etc.

the scope of purity & such myths / your

aggression utterly

entrancing to

-night, –

think the trails of roving & vicious girls

most detested & what we've been dreaming for
centuries

// the light on the bridges above the

city suspicion in beauty

, the kind that is turned against us

~~but is / is~~

such remarks of the english, their

freshly brutal nation soak

'd in a self-pity we will not call

hysteria / the hysterical

a domain from which we witness,,

you are weapon as you reflect / to

put breath & its emerge

-nt body in the line

cleaves & switches of the blasted
 cities of our living, th-
 rough fabric of our thighs /confrontation
 of its seas / edged in
 dominant provident
 / tecture of colony sky
 unbroke bitter

our softsteel english
 shoes / beauty potent in cobble
 / fend off all satistics / a
 book of ourselves, in living-

of violence/violating, residing in
 the rust of its histories, emotions &
 common grammar // sense on which
 their country is to be continued

[11.11.2016]

for what we may be
the left from a future torched,
working to deeper life
 , we: lost girls, broken femmes / deviant
 aching spines & flesh,
built on the shuttered mouths of rape apologists
 , vibrantly storms but does not just march, all
 fed, a collective support
 of all possible skins / builds
 conceptions & homelines to ~~ff~~
 undercommon post
 -poning the fresh govern
-ance of recognition / siren clawing
up the street, teaches an ftp through all
 action,, feels beyond the future
 ruling fascists store for us / eyes
 closed on its corpses / present
in tonight's dreams, the dead left
do not want us to love as much as this
 , we: anxious girls, slept debt,
 certain siblings, on call to the street
 , bandagers, we gossiped / kissed through our repressions abet
 vicious nights, an urgent existence fleets
 into & out of these burning days

of how we might be living tonight. in
-hibition of possible hours, move
ments, purged actualities,
the era closed
, bitter grievance

that calls itself a norm ::

gradients & the system

atic regulations of senses / de-
regulated wires & debtchains / the systematic
slaughter of those invoked in the ink on your skin / girls
who flamed social revolution, . red

history of poetry we warmed bones / decade on
 , the decline of all winters for its remainder were sick
 the warmest month our blood vessels on record again our skel-
 -ter 'mones & chemicals
 we lived this to the fabric

. a full week since white supremacists stormed democracy five
months of theresa ,& the new defence regime scripted
already in royal / flooding the eco
-tropolis & circulate ~~the~~ draining
our possible friends.

ripped language neighbourhood / we
 never lived a realm of safety / they come
 for our skirts & eyeliner repelled
 by the glamour of our flesh / weaponise your heels
 as the senses we live by. you
 are so brilliant & vicious, all of you
 , what we try to hold through timezones
 / against the fascists from the danube to the
 pacific to the latest belt of radiation. clutch off
 & denigrate all nations

& their fables out of our skins

[november 2016]

growth deplete / derelict
 from our futures / south

bridge 10.02am g4s transport
 turns right onto chambers st.

to grasp frame without
 ever pressed by interaction
 of others / their easy narrations

we. onlines compared notes , found
 little remembrance, our
 fragmented / drained memories through spheres & digitals

waiting to pull the day out
 of the sea / on additional shifts

/ despite our contemporaneity / we
 among the ancient corpses of the city
 , the ease of this forgetting

through shroudscape / infrastructs
 futures across the estuary / they
 raid & declare the illegality of hands

⌘ wire-flesh striated h/ours, fatigued
 , laughing by the sunscape

all broadcast mixture & deadlines, distant
 friends, lack steps cognize the
 the music of y/our speech

broken lines of managers, de
 -tached & dematerialised / as you pro
-tected the water ~~△~~ *roved beyond all safety all fear —*

of what labours had made us hard
 , self-effacing ,
 assertive in the inverse of the
 meanings we were taught ,

balance your escapism , we
 put the trust back in the skills
 of girlhood , -vox & -gaze

scenes from futures decom they demolished responsibilities, down
mission'd / cirrus scatter -sized with the wish / supremacist,
 rhetorics of action, how
 easy runs government negating us & itself

winddrilling

*vertigo calves; our & eyes
framed to dimming light*

trace footfall / nervy
corridors for previous decades
, by which we'd try to speak :

fingers graze the glass &

*hinges , concave
/ greys, quad-
/ curve, grecian
jut*

*hole
in , digger
echoes*

hums between flag
-stone & deviance
; inhabits wave
lengths frac
turing / dreams through the isolations of our cores
; where you witness
edges bright, so few
heads/ figured /yeah for

full lunar gravi
tations [] in sleep the
lines vacate

to keep grasp of the beauty in it; su
staining the knowledge in its
sadness , what

erased, diminished as the
mark of youth, draws
us out of its generation

such sugar will taste & / sound
rupture / a futures it by your beauty / what
/ wanting & vitamin ~~4~~ grows outside forecast

collapsing temporalxs
 , shot through the scope of memories
 / *jackie called it a wormhole*

hummed the tor
-sion & southern
eurolight

~~s-~~
~~li-~~

ppage of the now / det

plunderstones
terrainian / the altitude
& particu-
late

—ail dripped off encounters
 , soundings, the fabric of relation
 renewed / externality of friends /
 losses & deletions, our analogue lives,

the worlds of lyric we wrote through
 „rain teenage windows /
 dolescrouger brollies &
 repetitions, metropol cracks, our ::

evacuations of presence / our
 mediocre chemicals & faultlines, eva-
 porations of trust in the lives we lived by,

bitter days in the crushing
/ flat national economies / supra
nations, drain the arrogance ruling
class gagging hills up the cities we
disappear into

„ stores & spires weigh lumbar
/ our absent scatter of poets / an
imaginary they'd bury a bitter 'good'
/ hope this song reaches & soothes
you the
downer our lost
work & machines
„ in minutes these emptying atoms

floats [of] light / fractures[, again]

hung
 mist on
 , the ancient
 law / oceanic
 binding & jawbones

 cuts across two
 beaches, faces different

yous been trolling weathers over 400 years

about [love], dont talk to us

turn west, into the obfuscous driving

our speech repeats of creatures
 , affections their & try
 to attend to our healths

to then be here & away
 / a bare right to educating

caught / between
 trains & schedules
 , guiding confidence of active / dance
 of passion leads the crowd to
 the site of the detention centre, our
 calmest boats / 'gainst the scale
 our broken & trashed dreaming / pylons
 of razed plastic & birdless /
 bloated estuaries , rotting / private
 future healths advertised, the peace
 in our cancellation
 // where the collective-i collapses, illegible
 works of our sisters / the
 shading of our hardworn flesh
 finesse of lives curbed by debt & shipping

if your body should be territory
activity to keep at task , confidence
in discerning retreats , your
want of weight unspent on

decommissioned from celebration

tenuous company of blood

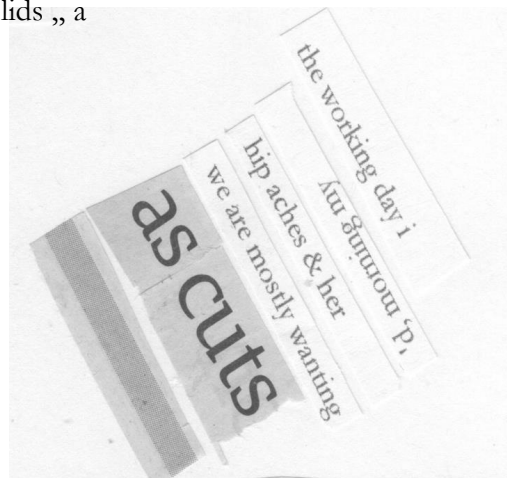
our/s substance kept secured, profiled

flapper sequins, metallics, the grrls who loved us in

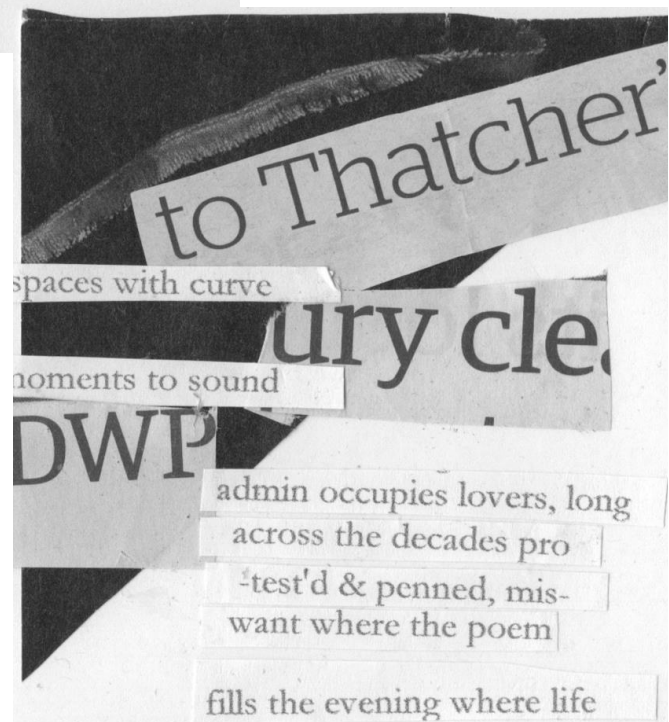
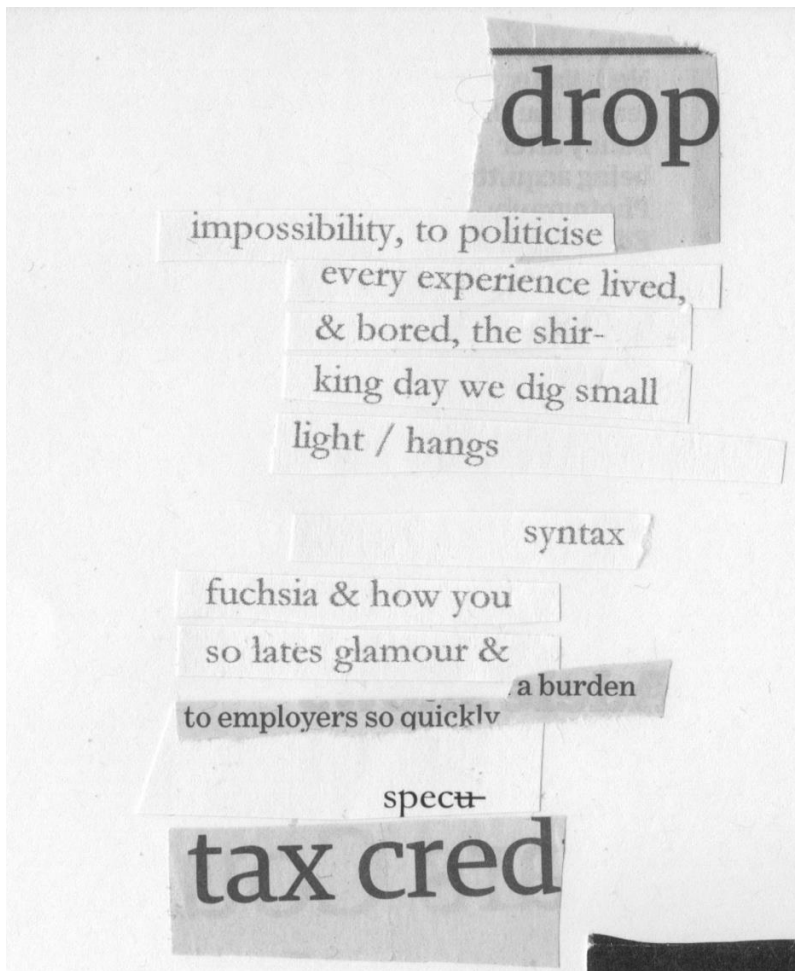
shoulders [t]he[i]r politics, fitted / torn as
 abstract shreds clean walls crisis
 ordinariness of the day,,; our
 market coercions , fiscal
 prosecutor , luminescent / circle
 of concerns "*siamo*
 troppo sexy per lavorare"

fast

lative histories of our boredom
 chemical distress;
 dress your lids ,, a



remained inside houses, how yur whiteness exhausts



anni, alli & micha, of ex
 -pression held together
 sing always of our most & vital friends

our

momentary revolutions, the
queers met as we traipsed,, anxiety's
arrhythmia: lovers held their
agonies,, we were sunkissed &
chilled, interrupted by currency

so worn the sea
& the harr
sky's hue unreal

thrifts the dream , spills coffee or gin
or ~~f~~-thrill skirts-you / washed o-
ver loving heads , need to shut eyes
revelled your gender bright shades

02/03/2017 12:39

that breaks our downgazing
 , felt threads our deviance
 of the season, scratched
& sky undercuts dayworld
 beauty with bitterness,
the frost inhabiting arterials, our /
splits the fl by our shirts

of our abstract dreams we held arms though
 , counter to cold
 / light brinkling hills

the decade's gutting, tor
 -rentwash & is-
 land bit
 -ter

> Fears over values

;; fractures soli/dares, mir
 (ror)ed cultures of exile
 „ our governed blessings &
 a realistic level of risk o
 and Borders Police. They

repay the love

to ration care
 scraps, cut trans-femmes
 off, our values structurally decomposed; the
 institutions & thought were barbed, de-
 manded souls to trade hours

Leaked Treasury

for the myth of future money. the

Securing Our University

held your throat [, complicit

> Calls for discipline

palms / beauty, showed cas-
 ually how to write, a sa-
 lary & peace/s severed, scrapped
 birthplaces, that you
 sung & cried a life
 here

; Prevent'd the question of citizenship.

already the border:
 the union apologist to feminised violence. The
to fear from Brexit,

[after l'aquila]

for the transfeminist strikers of the cirque conference

lavoratrici/ -tori transfemministe in sciopero dalla conferenza cirque

how y(our rage cut

abstractions, per-

f

orm-

ativity

severe

'd from

our living, the

faultlined town, the bare rebuilt

University policing team

, saturate dust, rhetoric, ~~f~~ ca-

pital's prayers in the nature of disaster

, the stand of the rubble &

stult-/wedded white to the 90s

/ forever the fetish cisqueer postmod, the

preferential deals from

appropriation of our beauty & cult

ures, behind flesh, carnivorous

Government

narrations as fact, her-

story back our loving, brightness &

lipstick, our italophone precarity so clear

:: we were to work no more minutes

, drained adrenals, tense flesh, the

The demand is out there, our dissidence &

deviant macerated to the tune of comfort

;; the autonomous zone, we bore our theory

through our striking flesh, refused

chasing of papers, impact, scorched demands of

diffused inclusivity ---

you sell to the world.

has been forced to stop

in the refusal to sustain us we

halt politeness, smiles & affirmations

, in the care in our working

, free hours torn back into the day

[april 2017]

on the vision of yur futures, ruptured isles
 & defences, screamer
 oil perished, again stolen, exhausted,
 newsfragments of racial plunder
 , two point

zero empire the truth in yur
 arrogant dreams is the structure
 of hatred ~~FA~~ foul
 reconstruction of nation,
 pinned to
 weapons & trade & borders & dissipate
 democratic mandate

~~[S/]~~ its
 bunting & treacherous flagscum
 , our
 collective extinctions rapid
 „ yur
 intention & offerings of nationhood
 in-
 scribed on ancestral bones, our

served years, blood of lovers un-
 derfunded hospital corridors, the
 gems of our arms & care, that
 the institutions backing yur voice will perish
 a day we burn into,, false
 island decades scorched

, a continual sequence
 of deprivations
 , passing imaginary
 for[c]ecasts & debts, quantifications &
 passport controls, grecian
 offices, glass, detention & cells,
 musterpoints, emergency //

worldpicture
 we sew through the brightness / our
 sisters &
 siblings , our: slippage attentions, the
 volume in our sonic eyes painted
 , scores & ankles
 caught boredom of dailiness, post-it
 semaphores drone
 the westport, 1.43 westbound g4s
 transport, our sharp &
 resolute beauty / distorsion
 on the neofash ordinary is unbroken

lines & ignorance; jimmy
 baldwin & chalked rimbaud streets, every
 screech of fist & wardrobe; insurrectionary
 teenage dreams from sweat & pave
 // communist heels, lived yur

contradictions, flying
 false truth, the violence
 of yyr wills & wage relations, we
 work for yyr abolition continual

we have come to remove, oh
 so beautiful / tended
 & the polished, waste
 seepage through boardrooms unwashed
 streets towering glass soot-padded
 , corners & clothes, w/here we
 seize the invisible behind yur flourishing , its racial
 & gendered distributions
 of labour & violence & surplus-value

 ff stagnant,
 what boomed the generation grown
 draining the spread of distribution
 „ rotting cities, *we / here* &
queer / punch a local nazi

„ we withdraw yyr domains of vitality / produc-
 tivity gap blessed, spring light
 attitudes , shirker lips
 laid on her lovers, demand
 obsolescent gloss / periscope apologist
 towns, tended & forged

 :: our gardens drain its circulatory
 , its clocks, dinnertables

 // we stitch

a new substance of time to
 be felt & demanded at all points
 , inaugurated / petals &
 thorns, the shades deepened of

 our love & with what we
 fabricate / shone our
 vibrant threads
 & cuttings daybreak
 coats & clarity gorgeous
 trash & décor shameless
 fucking,, the

defabrication of their entire world granted
 undercut all foreseeable days

[8 march 2017]

Conclusion

Always when I sew I think of Emma Goldman with her sewing machine, or Emma Goldman during her first night in jail “at least bring me some sewing.” Wikipedia says the sewing machine reduced average garment construction time from 14 hours to 2 hours. Somewhere on a sewing blog someone wrote of making new garments from existing ones: “use every part of the garment” and “each garment holds in it hours of a garment worker’s life.” I sew and the historical of sewing becomes a feeling just as when I used to be a poet, when I used to write poetry and that thing—culture—began tendrilling out in me, but it is probably more meaningful to sew a dress than to write a poem. I make anywhere from 10 to 15 dollars an hour at any of my three jobs. A garment from Target or Forever 21 costs 10 to 30 dollars. A garment from a thrift store costs somewhere between 4 to 10 dollars. A garment at a garage sale costs 1 to 5 dollars. A garment from a department store costs 30 to 500 dollars. All of these have been made, for the most part, from hours of women and children’s lives. Now I give the hours of my life I don’t sell to my employers to the garments.

‘Sewing’, Anne Boyer (2015: 29).

“Having given up literature” at the outset of *Garments against Women* (25), Anne Boyer elaborates a thoroughly defamiliarised relation – from what has been built through capitalist production and its transformation – between clothing, labour and the body. Drawing small moments of radical herstory into the text, Boyer offers a small homage to the undifferentiated labour of so many feminised workers of the garment industry – disappeared from view, and at times from the world altogether. For Boyer, the (ex-)poet’s own body appears as “an eternally irregular, perspiring and breathing three-dimensional object” (30), a crip, femme body at a remove from its inhabitant, objectified on contact with the object of the garment, contact within a Marxian relation between things. Labour against the flow of capital, given back to the commodities through a form of historically feminised labour, becomes a creative alternative to the estrangement and alienated wage labour. The lone seamstress is so historically out of sync that the labour she undertakes seems like queer social reproduction where the social relation is primarily between things, a relation of commodity

fetishism, where the seamstress's thoughts seem fixated on the abstraction of the price of these things. The seamstress's isolation seems far removed from the forms of queer collectivity and world-making that I have discussed throughout the thesis. Yet the sociality of her labour is encoded through sewing as herstorical solidarity with feminised workers across time and geographies. To situate one's own labour within a herstory of feminised workers opens up the affects of the trails of such work – "the historical of sewing becomes a feeling". Boyer breaks the spell of the naturalisation of a racial and gendered division of labour by reflecting the affectivity of such work.

This work is economically unviable ("I almost save money like this", 29), yet it is in its lack of viability that its queer Marxism emerges. While the poem details the ambivalence of its speaker towards the labour it describes, it presents a vision of queer possibility for queer labour and social reproduction. The defamiliarisation enacted by Boyer – in sewing and in text – reveals the fetish character of such labour as commodified labour-power. How might such defamiliarisation reflect the counter-histories of the work that queer and trans people have undertaken in hours not sold to (and hours stolen by) capital for wages? Our work has been out of sync with history according to racial capitalism; our work has been in solidarity with the subjugated in a manner similar to Boyer's sewing – even if at times in limited forms. Our work has been disappeared and marginalised in the annals of capitalism.

Queer Marxism conceptualises and elucidates the transformation of sexuality with the development of capitalist society. Through queer Marxist theory, we can account for the interrelation between capitalist accumulation and exploitation and the economic and cultural valuation of queer and trans bodies, situating the de/valuation of our lives and labours. I have detailed how queer

Marxism has historicised the reification of sexual desires, and theorised how Marx's labour theory of value and conception of the dual character of the commodity may be deployed to account for the transformation and abstraction of queer cultures. Paying close attention to the work undertaken by queer and trans people, I have formulated queer and trans social reproduction as a conceptual tool to describe the forms of caring labour that enable queer and trans bodies and lives – elaborating our sexualities, gendered expressions, providing nutrients and nourishment, elaborating communities and collectivities. Addressing historical accounts of queers transgressing racial and gendered divisions of labour, and attempting to overcome the homogenising abstraction of the value form under capitalism, I have argued that we may conceive of queer labour as working in service of queer world-making, elaborating possibilities of social transformation and creating cultures and spaces within which queers may work under less alienating conditions. Queer Marxism enables us to consider how our activity *as queers* is transformed by the demands of capital, to consider the labour we undertake for survival and for the elaboration of alternative worlds. However, as demonstrated in the firebombing of *Fag Rag* and *Gay Communities News*, such work may meet the violence of homophobia at the service of the accumulation of capital¹ – as queer spaces and community assets are destroyed and replaced by gentrifying capital, erasing – as described by Schulman (2012: 14) and discussed in the introduction – the memory of queer life and cultures. Through my readings of the poetry and labour of John Wieners, the activism of various collectives, and coalitional work across Gay, Third World and Black, and Mental Patients' Liberation Movements in Boston and New York, this thesis has provided a vision of what

¹ Boston's Downtown Crossing, where *Fag Rag*, *Gay Community News* and Good Gay Poets' offices were situated, is now a core part of the city's commercial sector.

worlds and politics can be constructed when queers challenge capitalism and the violence of its institutions. We have witnessed forms of collectivity and consciousness-raising that transform the cores of people's beings and that resurrect memories destroyed and marked for erasure from the historical record.

Queer Marxist theory is informed by the inseparability of sexual and social transgressions from capitalist accumulation, and is energised by active and creative resistances to the interests of capital, the normativities of capitalist society and the historical reifications of sexual desire. I have detailed examples of queer and trans bodies undertaking innovative forms of (self and collective) expression, bringing new sexual practices and social alternatives into being. I have provided accounts of the importance of poetics – through my readings of John Wieners and in my own work – in encoding and conceptualising such possibilities in being, to dream, announce and explore new desires, bodies and practices through poetic worlds and words; and, in the negative, to capture the devastations of life under capital and the violences enacted against queer and trans bodies, lives, memories and worlds.

As capital faces periodic crises of accumulation, we witness new possibilities in protest and poetics. Against the abstraction and commodification of queer cultures and the gentrification of their material basis within capitalist society, queer and trans bodies put themselves on the line to disrupt the everyday workings of capitalist society and the flow of capital itself. For instance, on 28th May 2011 during widespread mass protests against austerity measures in the UK, LGBTQI activist collective Queer Resistance and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence shut down a HSBC bank branch in Covent Garden, London – one of 40 branches in the UK closed by protests on the day – by setting up a 'mock'

sexual health clinic outside the bank. The action highlighted significant cuts to NHS HIV prevention services in London (43% of Primary Care Trust funding) alongside a 70% increase in HIV diagnoses among gay and bisexual men in the UK, and moves by the Conservative Government to open the NHS up to provision by private, for profit service providers.² Reporting in queer media at the time described how “[a]ctivists dressed as doctors and nurses wielded lubricant, latex gloves and condoms. The bank closed its doors whilst the group provided street theatre and spoke with passers-by”.³ This playful action is one of countless such actions undertaken by queer and trans healthcare activists to obstruct the daily flow of capital and its revenues and to highlight queer healthcare needs and demand improved funding – and indeed, to refuse the removal of funding – for LGBTQI bodies. It is one small act amid many this decade that have disrupted the everyday flows of financial capital growing in the abstract, M—M’,⁴ alongside numerous strikes, protests against carceral regimes such as prisons, detention centres and the police, shutdowns of shopping malls and high streets to highlight anti-Black police violence (while impacting everyday consumption practices and capital circulation), shut downs of airports to highlight the disproportionate impacts of global warming on the global south.

² Queer Resistance, ‘HSBC Covent Garden closes due to Queer Resistance and The London Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence’, 29 May 2011. Online at <http://queerresistance-blog.tumblr.com/post/5967295175/p1017331-by-pastthatsuitsyoubest-on-flickr-hsbc> (accessed 6 October 2018).

³ Ruth Pierce, ‘Queer activists close bank in NHS protest’, *Lesbilicious* (29 May 2011). Online at <http://www.lesbilicious.co.uk/campaigns-politics/queer-activists-close-bank-in-nhs-protest/> (accessed 6 October 2018).

⁴ M—M’ describes, in the form of interest bearing capital, money becoming more money, seemingly without an intervening phase – Marx describes this as the “capital fetish” (Marx 1991: 516-524).

Short of directly appropriating and communising human wealth and the resources of capitalists, how might queer and trans people – activists, poets, teachers, criminals, general proletarians – and those we stand in solidarity with disrupt, destroy, repurpose, waste and diminish the resources of wealth and the labour through which it accrues? As Boyer's poem indicates, we must continue to invent new means of relating amid the abstract relations of capitalist accumulation, wage labour, commodity production and devalued social reproduction – diverting and perverting the flows and expansion of capital in the directions of queer and trans lives, bodies and worlds.

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor. *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a damaged life*. London: Verso, 2005.

Adorno, Theodor, and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. London: Verso, 1997.

Agathangelou, Anna M., Daniel Bassichis, and Tamara L. Spira. "Intimate Investments: Homonormativity, Global Lockdown, and the Seductions of Empire." *Radical History Review* 100, Winter 2008: 120-144.

Aizura, Aren Z. "Trans feminine value, racialized others and the limits of necropolitics." In *Queer Necropolitics*, by Jin Haritaworn, Adi Kuntsman and Silvia Posocco (eds). Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2014, 129-147.

Alexander, M. Jacqui. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Mediations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory and the Sacred*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005.

Allen, Donald and Warren Tallman (eds). *The Poetics of the New American Poetry*. New York: Grove Press, 1973.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In *Lenin and Philosophy and other essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971. Online at <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>.

Arthur, Christopher J. "The Problem of Use-Value for a Dialectic of Capital." In *New Dialectics & Political Economy*, by Robert Albritton & John Simoulidis (eds). Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003, 131-149.

Baim, Tracey (Ed.). *Gay Press, Gay Power: The Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America*. Chicago: Prairie Avenue Productions and Winder City Media Group, 2012.

Benjamin, Walter. "Thesis on the Philosophy of History." In *Illuminations*. London: Pimlico, 1999, 245-255.

Berlant, Lauren and Lee Edelman. *Sex, or the Unbearable*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011.

Berlant, Lauren, and Michael Warner. "Sex in Public." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1998: 547-566.

Bérubé, Allan. *My Desire for History: Essays in Gay, Community and Labor History*. Edited by John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Bonney, Sean. "Comets & Barricades: Insurrectionary Imagination in Exile." *Mute*, January 2014.

—. *Happiness: Poems after Rimbaud*. London: Unkant Publishing, 2011.

—. *Letters Against the Firmament*. London: Enitharmon, 2015.

—. *The Commons*. London: Openned Press, 2011.

Boone, Bruce. "Gay Language as Political Praxis: The Poetry of Frank O'Hara." *Social Text* (No. 1, Winter 1979), 1979: 59-92.

Boyd, Nan Alamilla. "Sex and Tourism: The Economic Implications of the Gay Marriage Movement." *Radical History Review* (Issue 100, Winter 2008), 2008: 223-235.

—. *Wide Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2005.

Boyer, Anne. *Garments against Women*. Boise, Idaho: Ahsahta Press, 2015.

Brady, Andrea. "Making Use of This Pain: The John Wieners Archives." *Paideuma* Vol. 36., 2007: 131-180. Online at https://www.academia.edu/271607/_Making_Use_of_the_Pain_the_John_Wieners_Archives_ (accessed 5th October 2018).

—. "The Other Poet: John Wieners, Frank O'Hara, Charles Olson." In *Don't Ever Get Famous: Essays on New York Writing after the New York School*, by Daniel Kane (Ed.). Campaign & London: Dalkey Archive Press, 2006, 317-347.

Bronski, Michael. "The Last Gay Liberationist." *Boston Review*, December 20, 2017: <http://bostonreview.net/gender-sexuality/michael-bronski-last-gay-liberationist>.

Brooks, Flo. *Outskirts*. London & Exeter: Makina Books, 2017.

cárdinas, micha. "Pregnancy: Reproductive Futures in Trans of Color Feminism." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3, no. 1-2 (2016): 48-57.

Capildeo, Vahni. *Simple Complex Shapes*. Bristol: Shearsman, 2015.

Capper, Beth and Arlen Austin. "'Wages for Housework means Wages against Heterosexuality': On the archives of Black Women for Wages for Housework and Wages Due Lesbians." *GLQ* 24, no. 4 (2018): 445-466.

Carter, David. *Stonewall: The riot that sparked the gay revolution*. New York: St Martin's Press, 2004.

Césaire, Aimé. "Letter to Maurice Thorez." *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010): 145-152.

Césaire, Suzanne. *The Great Camouflage: writings of dissent (1941-1945)*. Edited by Daniel Maximin. Translated by Keith L. Walker. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2012.

Chamberlin, Judi. *On Our Own: Patient-Controlled Alternatives to the Mental Health System*. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1978.

Chasin, Alexandra. *Selling Out: The Gay and Lesbian Movement goes to Market*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000.

Clare, Eli. "Stolen Bodies, Reclaimed Bodies: Disability and Queerness." *Public Culture* 13, no. 3 (2001): 359-365.

Clark, Danae. "Commodity Lesbianism." *Camera Obscura* 1-2, no. 25-26 (1991): 181-201.

cobbing, bob. *kob bok: selected texts of bob cobbing 1948-1999*. Edited by bob cobbing and jennifer pike [cobbing]. Buckfastleigh: estruscan books, 1999.

Cohen, Bruce M.Z. *Psychiatric Hegemony: A Marxist Theory of Mental Illness*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Cohen, Stephan L. *The Gay Liberation Youth Movement in New York: 'an army of lovers cannot fail'*. New York and London: Routledge, 2008.

Conrad, Ryan (Ed.). *Against equality: queer revolution, not mere inclusion*. Edinburgh: AK Press, 2014.

Crosby, Christina, Lisa Duggan, Roderick Ferguson, Kevin Floyd, Miranda Joseph, Heather Love, Robert McRuer, Fred Moten, Tavia Nyong'o, Lisa Rofel, Jord[y] Rosenberg, Gayle Salamon, Dean Spade, Amy Villarejo. "Queer Studies, Materialism, and Crisis." *GLQ* 18, no. 1 (2012): 127-147.

Damon, Maria. "John Wieners in the Matrix of Massachusetts Institutions: A Psychopoeticgeography." *Journal of Beat Studies* 3 (2014): 69-92.

—. *Postliterary America: From Bagel Shop jazz to Micropoetries*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011.

Dardot, Pierre and Christian Laval. *The New Way of the World*. Translated by Gregory Elliot. London and New York: Verso Books, 2013.

Davidson, Guy. *Queer Commodities: contemporary US fiction, consumer capitalism, and gay and lesbian subcultures*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Davidson, Michael. "From Margin to Mainstream: Postwar Poetry and the Politics of Containment." *American Literary History* (Vol. 10, No. 2, Summer 1998), 1998: 266-290.

Davis, Angela Y. *Women, Race & Class*. New York: Random House, 1981.

D'Emilio, John. "Capitalism and Gay Identity (1982)." In *The Material Queer*, Edited by Donald Morton, 263-271. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996.

—. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States 1940-1970*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Dewhurst, Robert. *Ungrateful City: The collected poems of John Wieners*. SUNY Buffalo: Dissertation, 2015. <http://hdl.handle.net/10477/51538>.

Drucker, Peter. *Warped: Gay Normality and Queer Anti-Capitalism*. Leiden/Chicago: Brill/Historical Materialism, 2015.

Duberman, Martin. *Stonewall*. New York: Dutton; Plume (1994 edition), 1993.

Duggan, Lisa and Richard Kim. "A New Queer Agenda - Preface." *S&F Online* (Issue 10.1-10.2, Fall 2011 / Spring 2012), 2011 / 2012: Online at <http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/preface/> (accessed 27th March 2014).

Duggan, Lisa. *The Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. Boston, MA: The Beacon Press, 2003.

Dunn, James C. "The Mesmerizing Apparition of the Oracle of Joy Street: A Critical Study of John Wieners' Life and Later Work in Boston." <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:33826277>. Master's thesis, Harvard Extension School, 2017.

—. "The old brick city by the Atlantic: John Wieners's Boston Haunts." *Jacket 2*, 2012: <https://jacket2.org/article/old-brick-city-atlantic>.

Edelman, Lee. *No Future: Queer theory and the death drive*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.

Eng, David L. *The feeling of kinship: Queer liberalism and the racialisation of intimacy*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010.

Farris, Sara R. "Migrants' regular army of labor: gender dimensions of the impact of the global economic crisis on migrant labor in Western Europe." *The Sociological Review* 63, no. 1 (2015): 121-143.

—. "Social Reproduction, Surplus Populations and the Role of Migrant Women." *Viewpoint*, November 2015.

Federici, Silvia. *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2012.

—. "From Commoning to Debt: Financialization, Microcredit, and the Changing Architecture of Capital Accumulation ." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 113, no. 2 (2014): 231-244.

Feinberg, Leslie. "Portrait: Sylvia Rivera, 'I'm glad I was in the Stonewall Riot'." In *Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.

Ferguson, Roderick. *Aberrations in Black: Towards a queer of color critique*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Fernando, Suman. *Mental Health, Race and Culture*. 2nd Edition. Houndsmill, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002.

Floyd, Kevin. "Making History: Marxism, Queer Theory, and the Contradiction in the Future of American Studies." *Cultural Critique*, no. 40 (1998): 167-201.

—. *The Reification of Desire: Towards a Queer Marxism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Foucault, Michel. "Friendship as a way of life (1981)." In *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961 - 1984*, by Michel Foucault, edited by Sylvere Lotringer. New York: Semiotext(e), 1996, 308-312.

Freeman, Elizabeth. *Time Binds: queer temporalities, queer histories*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.

Freud, Sigmund. "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works* (Volume 7), by Sigmund Freud, translated by James Strachey, 125-148. London: Vintage Books, 2001.

Gan, Jessi. "Still at the Back of the Bus': Sylvia Rivera's Struggle." In *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*, Edited by Susan and Aren Z. Aizura Stryker, 291-301. New York and London: Routledge, 2013.

Gluckman, Amy and Betsy Reed (eds). *Homo Economics*. New York and London: Routledge, 1997.

Goffman, Irving. *Asylums: essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961.

Gossett, Che. "Žižek's Trans/gender Trouble." *Los Angeles Review of Books*, September 2016.

Gossett, Che, Tourmaline [Reina Gossett], and AJ Lewis. "Reclaiming Our Lineage: Organized Queer, Gender-Nonconforming, and Transgender Resistance to Police Violence." *Scholar & Feminist Online* 10, no. 1-2 (2011 / 2012).

Griffiths, Bill. *War w/ Windsor*. London: Writers Forum & Pirate Press, 1974.

Halberstam, J. [Jack]. *In a queer time and place: transgender bodies, subcultural lives*. New York: New York University Press, 2005.

Hall, Stuart. "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity." In *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary conditions for the representation of Identity*, Edited by Anthony D. King (Ed.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, 19-39.

Hanhardt, Christina B. *Safe Space: Gay Neighborhood History and the Politics of Violence*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013.

Harney, Stefano and Fred Moten. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*. Brooklyn, NY: Minor Compositions, 2013.

Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Heaney, Emma. *The New Woman: Literary Modernism, Queer Theory, and the Trans Feminine Allegory*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2017.

Hennessy, Christopher. 'Homosexuality is a Poem: How Gay Poets Remodeled the Lyric, Community and the Ideology of Sex to Theorise a Gay Poetics'. University of Massachusetts - Amhurst: Doctoral Dissertations 2014-Current. Paper 302, 2015.

—. *Our Deep Gossip: conversations with gay writers on poetry and desire*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.

Hennessy, Rosemary. *Fires on the Border: The Passionate Politics of Labour Organising on the Mexican Frontera*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

—. *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism*. London: Routledge, 2000.

—. "Queer Visibility in Commodity Culture." *Cultural Critique*, no. 29 (Winter, 1994-1995) (1995): 31-76.

Hester, Helen and Nick Snircek. "The Crisis of Social Reproduction and the End of Work." In *The Age of Perplexity: Rethinking the World We Knew*, by BBVA (eds). Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, 2018, 335-351.

Hill Collins, Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought*. New York and London: Routledge, 1991.

Hocquenghem, Guy. *Homosexual Desire*. Translated by Daniella Dangoor. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993.

Hoffman, Amy. *An Army of Ex-Lovers: My Life at Gay Community News*. Amhurst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007.

—. "Boston in the 1970s: Is There a Lesbian Community? And if There is, Who is in it?" *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 18, no. 2 (2014): 133-141.

Holcomb, Gary Edward. *Claude McKay, Code Name Sasha: Queer Black Marxism and the Harlem Renaissance*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2007.

Holland, Sharon Patricia. *The Erotic Life of Racism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012.

Hunter, Chryssy. "The failed myth of political equality through law." TRANS*STUDIES, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA, September 8 2016.

Ingram, Richard A. "Doing Mad Studies: Making (Non)sense Together."

Intersectionalities: A Global Journal of Social Work Analysis, Research, Polity and Practice 5, no. 3 (2016): 11-17.

Irving, Dan. "Elusive Subjects: Notes on the Relationship between Critical Political Economy and Trans Studies." In *Transfeminist Perspectives*, Edited by Anne Enke. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012, 153-169.

—. "Normalized Transgressions: Legitimising the Transsexual Body as Productive." *Radical History Review* (Issue 100, Winter 2008), 2008: 38-60.

Jackson, Don. "dachau for queers." In *The Gay Liberation Book*, Edited by Len Richmond and Gay Noguera, 42-49. San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1973.

Jarman, Derek (Dir.). *The Last of England*. London: Second Sight, 1987. [Audio/Visual].

Jay, Karla and Allen Young (eds). *Out of the closets: Voices of Gay Liberation*. London: GMP Publishers Ltd, 1992.

Joseph, Miranda. *Against the Romance of Community*. Minneapolis, Minn.; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

King, LaKeyma. "Inversion and Invisibility: Black Women, Black Masculinity and Anti-Blackness." *Lies: A Journal of Materialist Feminism* (II).

Kirby, Ambrose. "Trans Jeopardy / Trans Resistance: Shaindl Diamond Interviews Ambrose Kirby." In *Psychiatry Disrupted: Theorizing Resistance and Crafting the (R)evolution*, by Bonnie Burstow, Brenda A. LeFrançois and Shaindl Diamond (eds). Montreal & Kingston, London & Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.

Klotz, Marcia. "Alienation, Labor, and Sexuality in Marx's 1844 Manuscripts." *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society* 18, no. 3 (2006): 405-413.

—. "Introduction: Toward a Marxian Sexual Politics." *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society* 18, no. 3 (2006): 383-386.

Kunzel, Regina. "The Flourishing of Transgender Studies." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1-2 (2014): 285-297.

Landerson, Louis and Liberation News Service. "Psychiatry and Homosexuality: New 'Cures'." In *The Radical Therapist, by Radical Therapist/Rough Times Collective*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974, 166-170.

Lefrançois, Brenda A., Robert Menzies and Geoffrey Reaume. *Mad Matters: A critical reader in Canadian Mad Studies*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2013.

Lewis, Abram J. "'We are certain of our own insanity': Antipsychiatry and the Gay Liberation Movement." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 25, no. 1 (2016): 83-113.

Lewis, Abram J. "Trans History in a Moment of Danger: Organizing Within and Beyond 'Visibility' in the 1790s." In *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, by Tourmaline [Reina Gossett], Eric A. Stanley and Johanna Burton (eds). Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2017, 57-90.

Lewis, Holly. *The Policies of Everybody: Feminism, Queer Theory and Marxism at the Intersection*. London: Zed Books, 2016.

Leyland, Winston (Ed.). *Angels of the Lyre: A Gay Poetry Anthology*. San Francisco: Panjandrum Press / Gay Sunshine Press, 1975.

—. *Gay Roots: Twenty Years of Gay Sunshine*. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1991.

—. *Gay Sunshine Interviews: Volume 2*. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1982.

Lorde, Audre. *The Audre Lorde Compendium*. London: Pandora, 1996.

Love, Heather. *Feeling Backwards: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Lugones, Maria. *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions*. Lanham, MD. and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

Liu, Petrus. *Queer Marxism in Two Chinas*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015.

Lukács, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971.

Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. *Selected Works in One Volume*. London: Laurence & Wishart, 1968.

Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 3. Translated by David Fernbach. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

—. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 1. Translated by Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin Books, 1990.

—. *Grundrisse*. London: Penguin, 1973.

—. *Notebook Comments on James Mill's Éléments D'Économie Politique*. Berlin: Erste Abteilung, 1844/1932.

—. *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1959.

Mayakovsky, Vladimir. *How Are Verses Made?* Translated by G. M. Hyde. London: Jonathan Cape, 1970.

McRuer, Robert. *Crip theory: cultural signs of queerness and disability*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2006.

McRuer, Robert. "Crippling Queer Politics, or the Dangers of Neoliberalism." *Scholar & Feminist Online* (Issue 10.1-10.2, Fall 2011 / Spring 2012, 2011 / 2012: Online at <http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/cripping-queer-politics-or-the-dangers-of-neoliberalism> (accessed March 31st 2014).

Mecca, Tommi Avicolti (Ed.). *Smash the Church, Smash the State! The early years of Gay Liberation*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 2009.

Metzl, Jonathan M. *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2011.

Mieli, Mario. *Towards a Gay Communism: Elements of Homosexual Critique*. Translated by David Fernbach and Evan Calder Williams. London: Pluto Press, 2018.

Mitchell, Martin et al. 'Implications of austerity on LGBT people in public services'. London: NatCen Social Research, 2013.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres (ed.). *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Moncrieff, Joanna and Hugh Middleton. "Schizophrenia: a critical psychiatry perspective." *Current Opinion in Psychiatry* 28, no. 3 (2015): 264-268.

Moore, Patrick. *Beyond Shame: Reclaiming the Abandoned History of Radical Gay Sexuality*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2004.

Morgensen, Scott Lauria. *Spaces Between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonisation*. Minneapolis, Minn.; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Morton, Donald (ed.). *The Material Queer*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996.

Muñoz, José Esteban. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.

—. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

Myles, Eileen. *Maxfield Parrish: New and Selected Poems*. Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1995.

—. *Not Me*. New York: SemiotextE, 1991.

—. *The importance of being Iceland: travel essays in art*. Los Angeles, London: Semiotexte, 2009.

Nelson, Maggie. *Women, The New York School, and Other True Abstractions*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007.

O'Hara, Frank. *The Collected Poems of Frank O'Hara*. Edited by Donald Allen. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

O'Sullivan, Maggie. *Body of Work*. Hastings: Reality Street, 1996.

Parker, Andrew. "Unthinking Sex: Marx, Engels, and the Scene of Writing." In *Fear of A Queer Planet*, Edited by Michael Warner. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, 19-41.

Pellegrini, Ann. "Consuming Lifestyle: Commodity Capitalism and Transformations in Gay Identity." In *Queer Globalisations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism*, by Annaldo Cruz-Malame and Martin F. Maralansen IV (eds), 134-145. New York: NYU Press, 2002.

Penney, James. *After Queer Theory: The Limits of Sexual Politics*. London: Pluto Press, 2013.

Peñaloza, Lisa. "We're here, we're queer and we're going shopping! A critical perspective on the accomodation of gays and lesbians in the U.S. marketplace (1996)." In *Queer Economics*, by Joyce Jacobsen & Adam Zeller (eds). Abingdon: Routledge, 2008, 304-329.

Perloff, Marjorie. "The Corn-Porn Lyric: Poetry 1972-73 ." *Contemporary Literature* 16, no. 1 (1975): 84-125.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi. 'A Modest Proposal for a Fair Trade Emotional Labor Economy (Centered by disabled, femme of color, working class / poor genius)'. *Bitch Magazine*, 2017.

<https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/modest-proposal-fair-trade-emotional-labor-economy/centered-disabled-femme-color-working>.

Pitt (Cohen), Joni and Sophie Monk. "'We build a wall around our sanctuaries': Queerness and Precarity." *Novara Media*. August 28, 2016.

<https://novaramedia.com/2016/08/28/we-build-a-wall-around-our-sanctuaries-queerness-as-precarity/>

Preciado, Paul B. *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era*. New York City: The Feminist Press, 2013.

Puar, Jasbir (Ed.). "Precarity Talk: A Virtual Roundtable." *TDR: The Drama Review* 56, no. 4 (2012): 163-177.

Puar, Jasbir. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Duke University Press, 2007.

—. "Israel's gay propaganda war." *The Guardian*, July 1, 2010.

Raha, Nat. "A Queer Excess: The Supplication of John Wieners." *The Critical Flame*, no. 38 (September / October 2015): <http://criticalflame.org/a-queer-excess-the-supplication-of-john-wieners/>.

—. "'out of jail and on the streets again': Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries and the praxis of transfeminism of color." forthcoming.

—. "The Limits of Trans Liberalism." *Verso*. 09 21, 2015.

www.versobooks.com/blogs/2245-the-limits-of-trans-liberalism-by-nat-raha (accessed 10 09, 2016).

—. "Transfeminine Brokenness, Radical Transfeminism." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 3 (2017): 632-646.

Rao, Rahul. "Global Homocapitalism." *Radical Philosophy* 194, no. Nov / Dec (2015): 38-49.

Rembis, Michael. "The New Asylums: Madness and Mass Incarceration in the Neoliberal Era." In *Disability Incarcerated Imprisonment and Disability in the United States and Canada*, Edited by Liat Ben-Moshe, Chris Chapman and Alison C. Carey (eds.). New York, NY; Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, 139-159.

Rhodes, JD. "Fassbinder's Work: Style, Sirk, and Queer Labor." In *A Companion to Fassbinder*, by Brigitte Peucker (Ed.). Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing,, 2012, 181-203.

Rivera, Sylvia. "'Queens in Exile: the Forgotten Ones'." In *GENDERqUEER: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary*, by Joan Nestle, Clare Howell, and Riki Wilchins. Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 2002, 71-85.

Robinson, Cedric. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1983.

Robinson, Sophie. *The Institute of Our Love in Disrepair*. U.K.: Sad Press, 2012.

Rose, Gillian. *The Melancholy Science*. London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1978.

Rosenberg, Jordy and Amy Villarejo (eds). *GLQ* (Vol. 18, No. 1): Queer Studies and the Crises of Capitalism. 2012.

Rosenberg, Jordy. "The Daddy Dialectic." *LA Review of Books*, March 2018. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-daddy-dialectic/>

—. "Trans/War Boy/Gender: On the Primitive Accumulation of T." *Salvage*, no. 2 (November 2015). <http://salvage.zone/in-print/trans-war-boy-gender/>

Ross, Kristen. *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune*. Houndsmills: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1988.

Rousseau, Christina. "Wages Due Lesbians: Visibility and Feminist Organizing in 1970s Canada." *Gender, Work and Organisation* (Vol. 22, No. 4), 2015: 364-374.

The Runnymede Trust. "The 2015 Budget Effects on Black and minority ethnic people." London, 2015.

Salah, Trish. *Wanting in Arabic*. Second Edition. Toronto, Ontario: TSAR Publications, 2013.

Schulman, Sarah. *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a lost imagination*. Berkeley, C.A.; London: University of California Press, 2012.

Sears, Alan. "Queer Anti-Capitalism: What's Left of Lesbian and Gay Liberation." *Science & Society*, 2005: 92-112.

—. "Situating Sexuality in Social Reproduction." *Historical Materialism* 24, no. 2 (2016): 138–163.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Epistemology of the Closet*. London: Penguin Books [1994 edition], 1988.

—. "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading, or, You're so paranoid, you probably think this essay is about you." In *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002, 123-151.

seMbessakwini, Elias. "Sex, Gender, and Letters to Myself." In *That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*, by Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore (Ed). Berkeley, CA: Soft Skull Press, 2008, 199-209.

Serano, Julia. *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity*. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007.

Shephard, Benjamin. "'Sylvia and Sylvia's Children: A Battle for Queer Public Space'." In *That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*, by Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore (Ed.). Berkeley, CA: Soft Skull Press,, 2004, 123-140.

Sheppard, Robert. *The poetry of saying: British poetry and its discontents, 1950-2000*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005.

Shively, Charley. "Fag Rag: The Most Loathesome Publication in the English Language." In *Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, Part 2*, by Ken Wachsberger (Ed.). East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2012, E-book (unpaginated).

Somerville, Siobhan B. *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.

somMovimentonazioAnale. "Social Strike: Gender Strike". 18 July 2014.

<https://sommovimentonazioanale.noblogs.org/post/2014/07/18/social-strike-gender-strike/>

Spade, Dean. *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics and the Limits of the Law*. Brooklyn, NY: South End Press, 2011.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value." In *In Other Worlds: Essays on Cultural Politics*, by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 154-175. New York: Routledge, 1988.

Spott, Verity. *Balconette*. London: Veer Books, 2014.

—. *Click Away Close Door Say*. London: Contraband Books, 2017.

Stanley, Eric A. & Nat Smith (eds). *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*. Oakland, CA & Edinburgh: AK Press, 2011.

Starkman, Mel. "The Movement." In *Mad Matters: A Critical Reader in Canadian Mad Studies*, by Brenda A. LeFrançois, Robert Menzies and Geoffrey Reaume (eds). Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2013, 27-37.

Staub, Michael E. *Madness is Civilization: When the diagnosis was social, 1948-1980*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Stewart, Michael Seth. "'For the Voices': The Letters of John Wieners." *CUNY Academic Works*, 2014: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/292.

Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (Untorelli Press Ed.). *Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries: Survival, Revolt and Queer Antagonist Struggle*. Untorelli Press, 2013.

Stryker, Susan & Aren A. Aizura (eds). *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*. New York & London: Routledge, 2013.

Stryker, Susan. *Transgender History*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008.

—. "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity." *Radical History Review*, Issue 100, 2008: 144-157.

Sutherland, Keston. "Marx in Jargon." *World Picture Journal*, no. 1 (2008): http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_1.1/KSutherland.html.

—. "The World and John Wieners." *World Picture Journal*, no. 7 (2012): http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_7/Sutherland.html.

Sycamore, Mattilda Bernstein (Ed). *That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*. Berkerly, CA: Soft Skull Press, 2008.

Szasz, Thomas S. *The manufacture of madness: a comparative study of the Inquisition and the Mental Health Movement*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1970.

Tatonetti, Lisa. *The Queerness of Native American Literature*. Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Teal, Donn. *The Gay Militants*. New York: Stein & Day, 1971.

The 1917 Collective. "Capitalism and Homophobia: Marxism and the Struggle for Gay / Lesbian Rights." In *The Material Queer*, by Donald Morton. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996, 369-379.

Tinkcom, Matthew. *Working like a homosexual: camp, capital, cinema*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002.

Tolbert, TC & T. Trace Peterson (eds). *Troubling the Line: Trans and Genderqueer Poetry and Poetics*. Callicoon, NY: Nightboat Books, 2013.

Toupin, Louise. *Wages for Housework: the history of an international feminist movement (1972-1977)*. London: Pluto Press, 2018.

Tourmaline [Reina Gossett], Eric A. Stanley and Johanna Burton. *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 2017.

Uziell, Laurel. *Instant Cop Death*. London: Shit Valley, 2017.

van der Drift, Mijke and Nat Raha. "Radical Transfeminism." In *New Feminist Studies*, by Jennifer Cooke (Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.

Virtanen, Juha. *Poetry and Performance during the British Poetry Revival, 1960-1980*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Wages Due Lesbians. *Policing the Bedroom and how to refuse it*. London: Crossroads Books, 1991.

Wang, Jackie. *Carceral Capitalism*. New York: Semiotext(e), 2018.

Wanzer-Serrano, Darrel. *The New York Young Lords and the Struggle for Liberation*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015.

Ward, Jane. "Gender Labor: Transmen, Femmes, and Collective Work of Transgression." *Sexualities* 13, no. 2 (2010): 236–254.

Warner, Michael. *The trouble with normal : sex, politics and the ethics of queer life*. New York: Free Press, 1999.

Weeks, Kathi. *The Problem With Work: Marxism, Feminism, Antiwork Politics and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011.

Wesling, Meg. "Queer Value." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* (Vol.18, No. 1), 2012: 107-126.

Wieners, John. *A Book of Prophecies*. Edited by Michael Carr. Lowell, MA: Bootstrap Press, 2007.

—. *Behind the state capitol; or, Cincinnati pike: cinema découpages, verses, abbreviated prose insights: a collection of poetry*. Boston, MA: Good Gay Poets, 1975.

—. *Cultural affairs in Boston: poetry & prose, 1956-1985*. Edited by Raymond Foye. Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1988.

—. *Selected Poems*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1972.

—. *Selected Poems, 1958-1984*. Edited by Raymond Foye. Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow Press, 1986.

—. *Stars Seen In Person: Selected Journals*. Edited by Michael Seth Stewart. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2015b.

—. *Strictly Illegal*. Edited by Jeremy Reed and Patricia Hope Scanlan. Yapton, UK: Artery Editions, 2011.

—. *Supplication: Selected Poems of John Wieners*. Edited by Robert Dewhurst, Joshua Beckman and CA Conrad. Seattle, Washington: Wave Books, 2015a.

—. *The Journal of John Wieners / is to be called / 707 Scott Street*. Los Angeles, CA: Sun & Moon Press, 1996.

Wilkinson, John. *The Lyric Touch*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing, 2007.